LOOK OUT FOR A STARTLING FIRST PAGE LEDGER STORY NEXT WEEK

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAUGHTER;

Or, THE MARKED COIN. By ANNIE BROWNLEE.

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CHAPTER I.

THE INVALID.

On the cool, green banks of a sleeping river, which ran through a luxuriant pine forest in one of the most wildly picturesque districts in northern Ontario, stands a lonely cabin. A vast stretch of pasture lands lay along the river and away to the west, where in summer the lumber king's horses graze peacefully.

It is a warm evening in the latter part of May. The sun has slowly disappeared behind the majestic pines that rear their stately heads in the west. The cabin door stands invitingly open, and drawn up before it is a large wooden rocker, in which sits a pale and wasted woman, whose gentle, refined face is bent upon the man at her side. The pure, high-bred face and intellectual brow seem strangely out of place amid their rude surroundings.

A gray-haired man sat with bowed head on a low stool by her side. He grasped one thin, wasted hand in a frenzy of anguish.

"Marion! Marion! how can you say it?" he cried pitifully.

"Hush!" was the gentle reply. "It's His will, and we must not rebel. You will still have our darling to comfort you." She tried to smile encouragingly at the grief-stricken man by her side.

"You don't understand what a cruel desolation it will bring to our home," he cried, his soul wrung with anguish.

"I know, I understand," she said. "But the change must come sometime. We can not always remain together." Her voice was husky and she turned her face aside.

"It's hard though. It's most bitter. We were everything to each other." He arose tottering and feeble, and paced the bare floor in deep agitation.

"Come here, George, I wish to speak with you while we are alone." She motioned him to the stool by her side. "Promise me that in a year or two you will tell Mildred of our past." Her voice was low but terribly earnest. "She will then be of an age to understand and sympathize with us. Remember, it is due to her that she be told all." She looked entreatingly at the weak-visaged man before her.

"Yes, Marion," he said in a weak, faltering voice. "I will tell her all." His form seemed to shrink and grow smaller.

"You will always remember that you have promised me that. If in a moment of weakness you are tempted to set aside this sacred promise, think of your dead wife, who was true to you till the last, and do her child justice. I entrust you with this most sacred duty; see that you faithfully fulfil it. Were she only a little older I would tell her myself. But she is too young to burden and confuse her young mind with the sad story at present."

"I will tell her," was all he said, his head bowed in his hands. "How long, think you, Marion, before this awful thing happens?" There was the sound of tears in his voice.

"I don't know, I cannot tell, dear; a few months at the longest." A deadly whiteness crept over her pale face at the sound of her own words.

Her companion moaned audibly, but remained with bowed head as before.

"Mildred should soon be home," the sick woman said, straightening in her chair and

peering anxiously through the gathering gloom. "How did she go, by the road or the river?"

"She took the skiff. She said she would enjoy the pull to the landing and back." the father answered, raising his white, despairing face.

Neither spoke for several minutes, and presently the sound of oars was heard on the river.

"Here she is now!" cried the mother, while the father arose and went to assist with the boat.

"Oh, papa!" cried the lovely girl, "I have heard such good news at the village. The postmaster's wife tells me there is a doctor staying on the island. He came with a party of tourists from the States. She thinks we should ask him to come and see mother." Her face was flushed a lovely pink, her soft, limpid eyes were filled with a glad joy.

"Thank God!" the father murmured. "We must see him in the morning. He may be able to save her yet."

"Father!" she cried, stopping abruptly, "is mother worse?" Her voice thrilled with a new fear.

"No, my dear, I don't think she is worse than she has been for some time. But unless she soon takes a turn for the better, we cannot hope to have her with us long." There was a wail of pain in his voice that pierced the young girl's heart like a sword.

Casting a hurried glance at her father's face, she silently gathered up her parcels from the bottom of the boat and went hastily up the grassy path that led to the cabin door.

"Back again, mother darling!" she said, kissing one pale, thin cheek, which never seemed so thin and pale to her before.

Mr. Blake followed closely, full of hope at the news Mildred had brought from the village. His wife listened patiently, a tired smile on her gentle face.

"You will let me bring this doctor to see you, won't you, mamma?" she asked in a pleading voice. "He will understand what ails you and you will soon be well again." Her troubled little face had a wistful look on it that touched her mother's heart.

"Yes, darling, you may bring him to see me. But don't expect too much. His skill may not avail. Remember, I have been ill many years. You must not be too sanguine."

Mildred, full of hope, busied herself with preparations for their evening meal. The fire was kindled and the kettle set down. The table was drawn from its place against the wall and spread with a spotless cloth, on which covers were laid for three. The flaky white bread was cut in dainty slices and laid on a plate. The fresh, creamy butter was placed temptingly by its side. A generous plate of cold chicken, a pitcher of fresh milk, and fruit, made up their evening meal.

Around Mr. Blake and his family a certain mystery hung, which even the most curious had been unable to penetrate.

About eighteen years before the opening of our story, Mr. Blake and his beautiful, refined wife, had settled in their present home, where a few months later their little daughter was born. The few white settlers who had preceded them looked upon them with wonder and suspicion. It was quite evident that they were accustomed to a far different life. Why then had they come to this wild, primeval district to seek a home? Their motive was not agriculture, for Mr. Blake made no pretense of farming, neither could it be an interest in the vast wealth of timber which the region offered, for the forest held no attraction for him beyond the game and sport which it afforded.

Another thing that puzzled the good people of the neighborhood not a little was the apparently easy circumstances of their mysterious neighbors. Mr. Blake neither toiled in the field nor the woods, yet the family were never in want. Finding that they were unable to solve the problem, they gave it up and accepted the Blakes as they were.

CHAPTER II.
AN ADVENTURE.

Mildred Blake was astir early the following morning. She wished to reach the island as early as possible, hoping that she might be fortunate enough to find the doctor there.

With a smile on her fresh young lips, she prepared their morning meal, tidied up their small cabin and made the gentle mother as comfortable as possible. Placing a volume of Shakespeare and her beloved Bible within reach of her hand, with a heart that was happy and joyous she left.

The father and mother gazed wistfully after as she tripped lightly down the grassy path to the river.

She was a beautiful girl, tall, slim and graceful. A wealth of dark brown hair was piled above a broad white brow; soft, liquid eyes and a face that was almost perfect in contour. It was a face that was bound to work awful havoc with the hearts of men, whether its owner willed it or not. Yet, withal, it was a face full of power and decision, a face that one instinctively trusted and would turn to for sympathy and help.

"Father!" she called from the river bank, "will you bring me my gun? I may be able to get a shot at a duck as I round the point."

The gun was brought and placed carefully in the bow of the boat. She pushed off, seized the oars and sent her light craft like a bird over the smooth water. Rounding a bend in the river she paused for a moment, kissed her fingertips to her father and mother in the doorway and passed out of sight.

"We have one thing in our exile to be thankful for, and that is our darling child. Without her life would be well nigh unbearable." The mother's voice was weak but full of infinite tenderness and love.

"Yes, she is our one ewe lamb. I shudder to think what life would be without her."

"I sometimes wonder what her future will be," the mother said in a troubled voice. "I have a vague foreboding that there will be trouble in her life. As a child she was safe among these wild, uncultured people, but now that she is verging on the estate of womanhood I tremble for her. Were she less lovely and attractive she would be more safe. I have sometimes feared that the French trader, Louis Pappineau, meant our darling no good. I have watched him when in her presence and have been filled with dread at the look in his eyes."

"I have noticed it also," the father said. "I had occasion to tell him the other evening that our house was no longer welcome to him. Much as I dislike making an enemy of the man, yet we must protect our child, and he is not a desirable associate for her."

It was an ideal morning and Mildred enjoyed the pull down the river. As she rowed on, a still sleepiness pervaded forest and river. Save for the occasional song of the birds, the silence was unbroken. She rowed steadily on and soon the river began to widen, forming the lake. Turning sharply around a bend in the river the beautiful Lake Nipissing was before her in all its wild grandeur. She paused a moment to drink in the exquisite scene, for Mildred Blake loved all that was beautiful in nature and art. The boat drifted lazily on with the current. Its beautiful occupant was lost in rapt contemplation of the magnificent stretch of blue water that lay before her. Beautiful green isles dotted its surface, which on this ideal May morning looked like a huge sheet of silver set with emeralds.

Suddenly the distant barking of a hound was heard on the still morning air. She remained perfectly quiet and it came nearer and nearer. She knew it was coming direct to the river, and took up her gun and placed it ready across her knee.

There was a crashing of underbrush close to the bank, then a splash in the water about twenty feet ahead. The girl raised her gun and took aim, all the fibres of the hunter coursing through her veins. Then suddenly she dropped it, while a look of pity stole over her tender young face. A little fawn was making a desperate effort to keep up with its mother, who kept turning to it in its mute, dumb way, encouraging it to greater efforts. Close behind came a huge, spotted hound, its great bass voice making the forest ring. It plunged straight into the water and seized the young fawn by the neck. The mother charged fiercely, but too late to save it. The pretty, spotted creature had received its death wound. With a look of almost human anguish the mother deer wheeled and made for the opposite shore. The huge brute was following mercilessly. Mildred raised her gun once more and this time there was a report that echoed for several seconds on the still morning air. With a howl of pain the spotted brute rolled over in the water, then drifted slowly down the stream.

Voices and hurried footsteps were heard coming along the bank of the river. Mildred Blake looked around and met the dark, angry face of the French trader. As he glanced past her to the body of his beloved dog floating on towards the lake his face grew purple with rage.

"What for you shoot my dog?" he asked, in a fine French rage.

"Why don't you keep your dog where he should be then? This is not the time to kill deer! What use is that pretty little creature to you or any one else, now that it is dead?"

"We didn't want the fawn, it was the deer we were after," he said, half-ashamed, half-defiant.

"And leave the little one to starve?" she answered, fine contempt in her voice.

The trader's two comrades now joined him, coming up the river from the opposite bank in a boat. The Frenchman jumped in the boat and they rowed to within a few feet of where Mildred sat in her boat, angry but undaunted.

Neither of the parties noticed a boat push off from the nearest island and rapidly approach them.

Mildred took up her oars and was about to continue her course down the river, but the Frenchman's boat barred her way.

"Will you please allow me to pass, Mr. Pappineau?" she asked with much dignity, her eyes beginning to flash again.

"Not so quick, my pretty one," he said. "We would enjoy your society for a while longer," with a coarse laugh, in which his companions joined.

"I will ask you once more to allow me to pass. Don't deceive yourself by thinking that you can alarm me, for you can't. Please move aside and allow me to pass!" Her voice was calm but determined.

"Not till you give me a kiss for having shot my dog." The beautiful face of Mildred Blake went crimson in an instant. Picking up her rifle she carefully examined it and said:

"If you advance one yard nearer you'll share the fate of your dog!" Her face was perfectly composed, but there was decision in every lineament.

Pappineau laughed loudly. "Do you hear that, comrades? She threatens us! Come, row in closer. I must have that kiss for the loss of the dog!" He seized the paddle and sent the bow of the canoe swiftly towards the courageous girl.

There was a crash for a moment and, when the smoke cleared away, part of the Frenchman's canoe was seen following the dog down the river, while with the remainder they were making all haste to the nearest shore.

"Brave!" called a chorus of voices from the shadow of the bank about fifty feet ahead.

Mildred looked hastily around, wondering what new foes were upon her, but her face brightened wonderfully as she recognized one of the occupants of the advancing boat as an old friend.

"Mr. Villnevue!" she said with a smile, "you arrived just in time!" The other occupants of the boat smiled broadly and cast admiring glances at the brave girl.

"But what does it all mean, Miss Millie?" he asked, much puzzled. "I thought for a time murder had been done," casting an amused smile in the direction of the trader, who was scrambling up the bank, while the remains of his canoe went floating down the river in search of the dog and its departed half.

"It means that I shot his hound. It appears that Mr. Pappineau and the two half-breeds were hunting and the hound chased a deer and its fawn into the river and there attacked and killed the fawn, then turned after the deer. I must confess I lost my temper and shot the dog. I failed to see the wisdom of ruthlessly slaughtering those poor harmless creatures. Mr. Pappineau then debarred my passage down the river and—and said things which he should not. I warned him, but he persisted; you have seen the result." She turned away half-ashamed of the confession, while over the face of the old hunter there settled a look of deep satisfaction.

"Something is not quite clear to me, Miss Millie, and that is why you did not give Pappineau the same medicine you gave his dog. I verily believe he needed it worse." The old hunter's face was thoughtful and earnest as he glanced at the blushing girl.

"Oh, I couldn't do that!" she said with a shudder. "I only wished him to understand that I was capable of defending myself, if need be."

CHAPTER III.
DR. HAMILTON'S VISIT.

"I heard, Mr. Villnevue, that there was a doctor staying on the island. Do you know if he is there at present?" Mildred asked, remembering with a pang the precious time she had lost.

"No, my dear, he is not on the island at present," the old man answered with a curious smile. "I believe the gentleman in question sits there," with a jerk of his thumb towards the stern of the boat.

A dark, handsome young man raised his cap for a moment. "I am at your service," he said with a smile that at once put her at ease. "But judging from appearances and the manner in which you put those ruffians to rout, I find it hard to believe you require my services," with eyes and voice full of restrained merriment.

"It is not for myself," she said, blushing prettily, "it's for my mother I wish your advice."

"Oh, beg your pardon," he said, at once serious and thoughtful. "I am at your service at once."

The young doctor stepped into Miss Blake's boat, took up the oars and rowed back up the river, while the hunter and his companion returned to the island. Pappineau and the two halfbreeds had disappeared in the deep pine woods.

The row to her home formed a new chapter in Mildred Blake's life. Reared among the plain, uncultured people of the district, to whom the higher things of life were unknown, she had never met any one from the outer world, of which she dreamed, but had never seen. That one half-hour spent in the company of an educated, refined man of the world changed her whole idea of life. When the boat touched the shore in front of her father's door it was with a feeling of regret that she arose. Never had the trip seemed so short as today. The doctor gracefully assisted her to the shore, tied the boat to its mooring, and followed this beautiful, wild child of nature into her father's rude cabin.

The young doctor looked very grave when he had finished his inquiries concerning Mrs. Blake. The invalid did not ask what he thought. She read his opinion in his face. She knew months before that there could only be one end to her sufferings. Therefore, she was neither shocked nor startled in having her opinion confirmed by a physician.

The young doctor soon left, promising to look in again on the morrow. Mr. Blake was seated in the boat ready to row the doctor back to his friends on the island. Mildred came out and walked midway down the path with the young physician.

"I don't need to ask what you think of my mother; I see by your face you can give us no hope," she said tremulously.

"No, I can give you no hope," he said gently. "I think your mother has understood this for some time."

"We thought it only a morbid fancy," she replied.

"The only comfort that I can offer you is that her sufferings will soon be over." He took the young girl's hand in a tender, lingering clasp, then turned abruptly and walked to the boat.

Mildred entered the cabin, the tears had welled up in her eyes and were slowly chasing each other down her cheeks. She went to where her mother sat in her chair by the window. Kneeling by her side, she buried her face in her lap and wept as though her heart would break. The sick woman did not try to stop her, knowing well that she would be better after this wild outburst of grief had spent itself.

"Mamma," she said, as the sobs grew less frequent, "why don't you say something?"

"There is nothing to say, my child. What the doctor has told you is true. A few more weeks and I will have passed out of this life. You must try and be brave and bear your trouble silently. It will not always be so hard as it seems now." She tenderly stroked her dark, glossy hair, whispering words of comfort and hope until the girl grew calm again. The mother and daughter talked long and earnestly of the future and its possibilities. The dying woman counseled her daughter as only a dying mother can. She pointed out clearly the danger signals which she must ever be on the watch for and avoid.

The beautiful girl listened intently to her mother's sacred teachings, and drank in the blessed truths of life, which helped to strengthen and sustain her in the dark hours of her after life, when the future looked black and desolate and no ray of sunshine penetrated the darkness.

They were still in earnest conversation when Mr. Blake rounded the bend in the river. Two hours had elapsed since the doctor and he had left, but to the two sitting there it seemed but a few minutes.

Mr. Blake came in sad and thoughtful, and during the entire evening no reference was made to the doctor's visit.

Each morning the young physician rowed over from the island to see his patient. He succeeded to a considerable extent in relieving her sufferings, but each day she grew weaker and more emaciated.

The inmates of the cabin by the river had a strange fascination for the young doctor. For the gentle, refined mother he felt a great pity and compassion. Why she should have spent the best days of her life in this wild, uncouth region he could not understand. His feelings for the lovely Mildred were not quite definite. Her beauty and loveliness charmed him, as did also her wild, courageous spirit. But, her thoughtful, considerate care for the patient invalid, her unceasing anxiety for her comfort and welfare, was her most powerful charm.

For Mr. Blake he had little sympathy and less patience. That an intelligent man could willingly condemn such a wife and daughter to a life in those lonely wilds, isolated from the society of those of their own sphere of life, was a problem which he could not solve.

The days passed by on leaden wings. Three weeks have elapsed since that eventful day on the river. During the last few days Mrs. Blake has grown much worse. She now rarely leaves her bed, and it is evident that the end is not far distant, and the knowledge has cast a shadow over the little household.

Mildred has heard nothing more of the French trader. But scarcely a day passes without his passing by the cabin by the river.

Busy with her household duties and the care of her mother, Mildred had well nigh forgotten the incident on the river. But her father looked worried and disturbed at the Frenchman's continual appearance in their locality.

CHAPTER IV.
THE WOUNDED INDIAN.

On bright, sunny afternoon Mrs. Blake, being somewhat better, Mildred decided to do some necessary shopping. Leaving her father in charge of the invalid, with the necessary instructions for her comfort, she saddled her pony and wound her way along the tortuous bridle path that led to the village of Nipissing.

Dismounting before the one store which the place afforded, she threw the bridle rein over the post and entered. The post-office and store were under the one roof, the only building of any pretension in the village. Mr. Donaldson, the proprietor of the store and postmaster, always had a warm welcome for the lovely girl. Perhaps the secret of his cheery smile for Miss Blake may be explained by the fact that she always paid cash for her purchases. The Blakes were never known to ask for credit.

"How'd do, Miss Millie?" said the smiling Donaldson, as the young girl advanced gracefully to the counter.

"How do you do, Mr. Donaldson? Pleasant day, is it not?"

There was the usual number of country store loungers present, busily engaged squirting liquid tobacco and swapping tales. As Miss Blake entered, every slouched hat was dragged respectfully forward, for "Miss Millie" was a favorite with all.

"How is your mother today?" asked the storekeeper.

"She is no better," was the quiet reply.

"I hear you have had the doctor from the island to see your mother?"

"Yes, Dr. Hamilton has been attending mother for some time," she answered with quiet dignity.

"Well, what does he say about her?" he asked, with much curiosity.

Mildred's lips quivered, but she made a desperate effort to appear calm.

"Dr. Hamilton can relieve her sufferings," she said, "but can give us no hope of her recovery." There was the sound of tears in her voice, but there was only one there who understood it.

"Is it that bad?" There was genuine regret on his honest face.

"If he can't cure your mother, what's the use of having him then? A fine bill he'll send your father when it's all over."

To do Mr. Donaldson justice, we must say that he was not heartless as his speech would seem to imply. Honest and outspoken he was almost to rudeness, but he never for a moment thought that his words could offend. His one thought at the moment was the awful waste of good coin when no good could result.

"Would you be so kind as to give me my papers? I must hasten back." Her voice died away in a low sob. A rough looking man from the lumber camps nearby blew his nose vigorously and walked to the other end of the building.

After receiving her papers—for it was characteristic of the Blakes that they never received letters—and purchasing the needful articles, she hastily left the store. A great lump had risen in her throat and nearly choked her. Tying her parcels in a handkerchief, she threw them across her pony's neck and started for home.

"I say, Donaldson," said the man from the camps, "I always knew you were an ass, but I imagined you had a heart somewhere in your makeup. You blankety blanked fool!"

"Hello there, Dave, what's the row?" Donaldson asked, not the least affected by the complimentary language.

"You blind bat! couldn't you see that you just about made that little gal cry?" with another volley of choice words.

"Why, what do you mean? I said nothing to make her cry. What are you driving at, anyway?" a puzzled expression on his face.

"You blanked numskull! Didn't you try to make the gal believe that the mighty dollar was of more value in this world than

her mother?" bringing his huge fist down with a bang on the counter.

"No, I didn't, comrade; you're a little off there. I said there'd be a pretty bill for that doctor just looking at the sick woman, and doing her no good." He turned away his head half-ashamed as he finished speaking.

"Now, see here, Donaldson, if your missus or the kid was sick, and you knowed for certain that they had to die, would you listen to their sufferings day after day if a few dollars would relieve them and make the trip smoother?" He looked keenly at the storekeeper from under his shaggy brows and smiled.

"Well, no, you may go your best that I wouldn't. I never thought of it like that. I'll apologize to Miss Millie the first time I see her." It was evident that he was woefully ashamed and anxious to atone for his unintentional rudeness.

"Give us your hand on it, comrade. I knew you didn't mean it, but it went home just the same, and that pretty gal has shed a good many tears before this, I'll wager." The two old friends clasped each other's hands warmly.

"I won't soon forget this, Dave. I'm glad you made me see it like that."

Meanwhile Mildred, with a heavy heart and tear-stained eyes, was hurrying homeward on her little pony. Her path led through a dense pine forest, where the air was laden with the health-giving and delicious aroma of the pines. The girl was plodding slowly along, her head bowed on her breast in sorrowful thought, when her pony stopped with a suddenness that almost unseated her. Directly in her path was the burly form of an Indian chief. He sat, or rather lay, with his shoulder propped against a tree. The shadows were beginning to deepen and she did not recognize him at once. Reining her pony to one side she took another glance.

"Why, it's Red Fox," she said, with a smile. "What's the matter? You're hurt?"

"The White Lily," he said, with an Indian grunt, and pointed to his foot.

The girl dismounted, threw the rein across her arm and approached the dusky form of the Indian. The injured foot was stretched flat on the ground and was horribly swollen and discolored. He essayed to rise, but sank back weak and helpless, his face contorted with awful pain.

"You have sprained your ankle and it's swollen dreadfully," she said, a thrill of pity in her voice.

"Um," he said, "slipped on the rocks by the Laughing Waters, and foot went bad." Mildred understood the Laughing Water to mean a waterfall about two miles up the river.

"And you walked all the way from the Laughing Water?" she asked incredibly.

"Um, the Red Fox has power I go for the lodge of my brothers," jerking his thumb over his shoulder in the direction of the river.

"You mean to the village down the shore?"

The Indian nodded. "My people are camped by the Great Water. I go to them."

"But that is a long way! You can't reach there tonight. Red Fox, the powerful chief, will stay with his white brother tonight. When the sun is above the treetops he will send word to your people by the Great Water and they will come and bring you to the lodge of your brothers."

The dusky face brightened. "It is good," he said. "Red Fox will sleep tonight in the lodge of his white brother."

Mildred brought her pony in close to the Indian and assisted him to rise. She supported him as best she could, and finally, after much suffering, he was astride the surprised pony, which tottered beneath his huge form. The beautiful girl walked ahead, leading her pony carefully over the rough places.

Fortunately they had not far to go. Descending into a deep ravine and then ascending an almost perpendicular hill, through a thick growth of underbrush, they came out into the pasture lands of the lumber kings of the district. A few minutes more and they drew up before the door of the cabin by the river.

Mr. Blake came hastily out. Recognizing the friendly Indian and hearing the explanation from Mildred, he carefully assisted the unfortunate chief into his cabin, spread a soft buffalo robe on the floor in one corner of the living room and helped him to it.

Mildred turned her pony loose in the little pasture lot behind the cabin, then hastened within. Greeting her mother affectionately, she then turned her attention to the stranger within their gates. A basin of warm water was brought and Mr. Blake set diligently to work bathing the injured ankle. The gentle invalid instructed her daughter in the preparation of bandages for the injured member. Stout linen bandages were soon ready and deftly applied to the unfortunate ankle.

The Indian's eyes followed the beautiful girl everywhere. There was a look of bewildering admiration and awe in their depths.

"My white friends are kind to their brother, Red Fox, powerful chief of all the Ojibways, will not soon forget. Red Fox will tell his people of the kindness of his brother who lives by the Sleeping Water, and they will always remember," he said, with an air of great importance.

"His brother is glad to be able to assist such a great chief as Red Fox," Mr. Blake answered solemnly.

"Ugh, Red Fox powerful chief: his people reaches from the Ottawa to the Magnetanaut." He made a sweeping wave of his hand, while his dusky face took on an air of comical importance.

"Red Fox is a very great chief and his people powerful in the land," Mr. Blake smilingly assented.

"Ugh! It is good!" he said, subsiding into an Indian silence which could almost be felt.

CHAPTER V.

A PRESENT FROM RED FOX.

The following morning as Dr. Hamilton was returning from his visit to the Blakes, he left word at the Indian village that their chief lay injured in the cabin of the white man by the river.

Four stalwart braves at once set out to bring their chief. After much handshaking and many expressions of friendship, Red Fox was removed to the boat, and started down the river to the lodge of his brothers in the village by the Great Water. Two days later an Indian came up the river. There was but one occupant, a typical Indian; straight, broad-shouldered and huge of form. He came direct to the little landing place in front of the cabin, unloaded his bark canoe and started with slow, stealthy steps toward the cabin.

Mr. Blake was absent, having just gone to the woods in quest of game.

As the low, stealthy rap sounded on the door Mildred opened it. The Indian nodded silently, then proceeded to disclose the contents of a bag that was slung across his shoulder. A brace of wild ducks, a half dozen partridges, a string of beautiful black bass and the quarter of choice venison was laid on the doorstep before the redman said a word.

"Red Fox sends a present to his friends," he said in a deep guttural voice. "He sends them his friendship and hopes they be well."

For a moment Mildred was at a loss what to say. She understood perfectly that the stalwart brave was expected to carry back to his native village the profuse thanks of the white people, else Red Fox might have cause to feel offended, and she must not suffer that. If her father was only there, he knew so well how to deal with these strange people.

"Tell Red Fox, chief of the mighty Ojibways, that his brother is in the forest beyond the Laughing Water. The White Lily is much pleased at the present of the great chief and his mighty people. His friends in the lodge by the Sleeping Water send him their friendship."

The Indian pulled his forelock, his face grave and solemn, and departed.

As Mildred stood looking at the present of the Indian chief, a small skiff shot around the bend in the river. It was Dr. Hamilton. The beautiful girl's face flushed beyond the rich, delicate pink as she recognized him. Her eyes lit up with a glad light of welcome, which the young man saw and understood, though this little wild flower of the woods did not. Reared in the atmosphere of her modest home, with only the companionship of the flowers for her playmates, little wonder then that she did not understand this strange, sweet something that had stolen into her innocent heart and changed her forever. From a child, with no thought beyond parents and home, she had grown into a girl with a true woman's heart filled with love and tenderness for the man who had come into her life so strangely. As yet she only knew that his coming filled her with delight, his departure with a sense of desolation, which was brightened, however, by the promised visit of the morrow.

Dr. Hamilton understood the situation much better. His heart went out to this beautiful wild child of the forest that first day he saw her. Her heart was to him as an open book whose every page he could read. He knew that as yet the woman's heart had not fully awakened, but he knew, also, that one word from him had the power to arouse the smouldering fires of love. During the past few days a fierce battle had been raging in his breast. He felt that his love for this beautiful girl was the most sacred thing that could come into his life. Yet he was not blind to the worldly side of the affair. He could see at a glance the difficulties that would arise were he to take this child of the woods and place her at his side in a great city, among the fashionable society in which he moved. Not that her education had been neglected in any way. Mrs. Blake had seen that her daughter's education was equal to her own, which had been acquired at one of the most select schools in the State.

The young doctor admitted that intellectually she was superior to many collegebred girls of his acquaintance, but she lacked a subtle something that could only be acquired through mingling with the outer world. Her every thought and action declared her to be a child of nature. Reared in the atmosphere of the pines, the flowers and the river, she understood the language of the birds, the flowers and the wild animals that roamed through her native wilds, but of society etiquette he feared to test her powers. That her tender, loving heart would suffer in the transplantation he could not doubt. He finally decided to let things take their course, hoping that the proverbial something would happen to make his way clear.

So the days passed at the little cabin. Sometimes the young physician spent hours in the cabin talking with the girl and mother or wandering through the fields and woods with the beautiful Mildred in search of the late wild flowers.

The parents had no scruples in allowing their daughter to wander alone with the young doctor. In the few quiet, earnest talks they had had established a certain understanding between them. They recognized in him a gentleman of their own world. A man of honor with whom they might trust their child in safety, and he never betrayed the trust. He never sought by word or deed to lead the girl's thoughts to himself. He was satisfied to see the sweet welcome in her eyes when he appeared and the shadow on her fresh young face when he left. As he gazed at the sweet, winsome face he thought that of all women he had seen she was the most perfect, not only in face and form, but in the sweet simplicity of her heart.

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE POWER OF THE FRENCH TRADER.

The days passed slowly by and Mrs. Blake grew weaker each day. Calling her husband and daughter to her bedside one afternoon she said:

"Dear husband and daughter, I feel that my hours in this world will be few, and before I die I would like to see and speak with the good minister that lives across the water by the hill. If it is possible that you could bring him to me it would comfort me much. I know that he and his good wife would stay with you to the end. It would be sad indeed were you to be alone when the last hour has come. For myself, it matters not, but for you it would be less hard were you to have the good minister and his wife to comfort you."

"I will go for him, mamma. If I start at once I can be back before nightfall." The poor girl was crying softly, but was trying to be brave and courageous.

The father bowed his head and wept as only a despairing man can weep. He realized that the hour had come when his life partner must leave him.

Mildred donned a dark gown and a neat little straw hat, drew on a pair of heavy kid gloves and started for the pasture lot to catch her pony. Leading the faithful little creature around to the door, she threw the rein over the post. She went to her mother's bedside and kissed the pale, marble cheek tenderly.

"I'll not be long, mamma," she said, trying to smile through her tears.

"My daughter," said the dying woman, "promise me you will remember what I said to you that first night of Dr. Hamilton's visit to us?" She held the girl's hand in a convulsive clasp.

"I promise, mamma; I could not forget our talk that day. It has comforted me a great deal. I will always remember it." She kissed her mother again and with a sob hurried away.

The dying mother gazed longingly after her beautiful child. As she passed from sight she raised on one elbow and called in a voice full of love. She fell back and exhausted. It may be that in that moment she foresaw that she would see her child in this world no more.

Mildred urged her pony to its utmost speed. She dashed recklessly along the dangerous little path that led to the village of Nipissing.

As she was passing by the postoffice the postmaster's wife came out to inquire for her mother. While the heart-broken girl was telling the woman in a broken, faltering voice of her mother, the tavern door opposite opened and Pappineau, the French trader, came out. Recognizing the weeping girl, he gave a low, astonished whistle.

As the brave girl hurried on, the trader advanced towards the unsuspecting woman. Being possessed of a smooth tongue, he soon succeeded in drawing from the woman where Mildred was going, and her errand thither. The kind-hearted woman never for a moment suspected that the profound expressions of sympathy uttered by the wily trader were not as sincere as they appeared.

Having secured the desired information, he entered the tavern again. Beckoning to a halfbreed, he went into a small room in the rear of the bar. Ordering a couple of brandies, he sat down, motioning his companion to do the same. The brandy soon arrived and was set on a table in the center of the room. The waiter having departed, Pappineau drew the bolt across the door and resumed his seat.

"Now see here, Pete," he said, with a cunning smile at the man opposite, "wouldn't you like to make a fiver before dark?"

"You've hit the nail square this time, boss!" he answered, gulping down the brandy.

"Just listen then and I'll tell you how you may do it." The two worthies drew their heads together and entered into a low, animated conversation, which lasted almost half an hour. Then they arose, their faces flushed and eager, shuffled the chairs noisily against the table legs and prepared to leave the room.

"Remember, Pete, the horses are to be at the bridge out of the village in forty minutes."

"Yes, boss, for sure in forty minutes."

After Mildred left the village her road lay through a lonely wood without a solitary habitation. Leaving the village by a long, narrow lane, she passed the country house behind which lay only a low swamp. Urging her pony on, she entered a lonely swamp, passed a creek which ran through the marsh, then into as lonely and desolate a piece of road as could be found in the district, where even in midday the shadows lurked thick and threatening where the huge beeches arched overhead, and the pedestrian got only an occasional glimpse of the blue sky above. As Mildred entered the sombre shadow of the woods she urged her pony on. Emerging from the shadows she crossed another rude wooden bridge, and then into the shadow of the beeches again. A few minutes more brought her to the forks of the road. The road by which she had come led straight ahead up a low swamp hill, nearly a mile in length, and away to the newly settled lands beyond. The road to the right was the lumbermen's cadge road and led to the numerous lumber camps that were scattered through the district. Mildred entered the left-hand road, which was scarcely more than a bridle path. Following this for about half a mile, she entered a clearing, in the middle of which stood a low log shanty. Drawing rein before the door, she rapped loudly with her riding whip. The door was opened immediately by the minister's wife, a portly, kind-faced woman, whose hair was slightly tinged with gray.

"Miss Mildred!" she said, her kindly face brightening at sight of the lovely girl. "Won't you come in, dear?"

"No, thank you. I must hasten back. Is Mr. Hartney at home?"

"No, my dear, he has gone over the hill to baptize an infant belonging to one of the settlers. But what is it, my dear, is your mother worse?" she asked kindly, noting the sudden blanching of the lovely face.

"Mother is much worse, Mrs. Hartney, we fear she can't last but a few hours longer. She wished me to bring Mr. Hartney and yourself to her."

"Poor soul!" the woman said, wiping her eyes with the corner of her apron. "What a blessed change it will be for her to be where there is 'neither sickness or death; neither is there any more pain.'"

The lonely, heart-broken girl turned her head away and sobbed quietly for a few minutes. "When do you expect him home?" she asked.

"Soon, my child. Annabel accompanied her father and was to be back before milking time. Go back home, dear, and tell your mother we will be with her by nightfall." She pressed her faded cheek against the fresh young face in a tender, motherly way, then bade her be gone.

Turning her pony's head in the direction of home, the noble little beast needed no urging, but dodged along at a brisk pace. Reaching the forks of the road, she was about to take the turn that led to the village, when a dark form stepped from behind a tree and grasped her bridle rein.

With a cry of terror, the brave girl applied her whip. The pony reared and plunged, but to no avail; she was held with a grip of iron.

"Not so fast, my White Lily!" he said mockingly. "I presume you have no speaking-iron this time."

With a cry of horror Mildred recognized her captor. It was Louis Pappineau, the French trader!

"Let me go!" she pleaded. "My mother is dying and I may be too late!"

"A very pretty tale," he said with a brutal laugh. "But if your mother is dying you can't save her, and I am anxious for your society on a little pilgrimage I am about to make."

The air was thick with the fumes of brandy as his hot breath fell on her cheek.

"But, Mr. Pappineau, what does this mean? I don't understand," she said, pale and trembling.

"It means, Miss Blake, that you are to accompany me to an Indian village some distance away and there we will be married according to the Indian customs."

"I cannot believe it!" she cried. "You would not dare do such a thing!" Her eyes were kindled with wrath.

"Oh, yes, I dare," he said, with a quiet irony. "I tried to act on the square; I asked your father for your hand in marriage, but he scornfully refused and forbade me his house. Louis Pappineau is not used to being refused so I just took this little matter into my own hands."

He led her pony along the cadge road for about a hundred yards. Pausing at the base of a huge spreading beech, he gave a peculiar whistle, which was immediately answered by the hoot of an owl.

Mildred looked helplessly at the man by her side, then determinedly exclaimed:

"You are taking a great deal of trouble for nothing. I will never be your wife; sooner than that I'd shoot myself."

"If 'twas that Yankee doctor I suppose you wouldn't object," he said sarcastically.

"Remember, I have told you the truth. I will never be your wife," she said fiercely.

"We will see," was the smiling reply. "The Indians will take you are my friends; they won't consider your consent necessary."

From the woods to the right came two halfbreeds, mounted and leading a saddled horse. Pappineau jumped into the saddle and started down the road in a trot, Mildred's pony following and the two halfbreeds bringing up the rear.

Mildred sat in her saddle silent but determined. Several times the trader tried to draw her into conversation, but failed. He could draw nothing from her, save a curt yes or no. An awful tumult was raging in her heart. She tried bravely to face the worst. She knew now that she would never look upon the face of her mother again, and for the future she was filled with fear. When the persecutions of the Frenchman would cease she could not tell, but one thing she was determined, she would never be his wife; death was preferable to that.

This strange and romantic story will be continued in the Ledger issue of next week. Do not miss the pleasure and instruction of reading this story to the end. If you are not already taking the Ledger regularly or if your subscription has expired, we strongly advise you to subscribe at once and get the balance of this startling story, as well as numerous great and thrilling serials that are awaiting publication in this best of all story papers. If the reader would like one of our King Canvas Aprons we would like six standard patterns without cost, please note the announcement of these premiums on pages thirteen and fifteen.

He Wanted Evidence.

A Denver hotel man tells the following story, and he says it's true: A few days ago a bride and groom from the country registered at the hotel.

"What are your rates for room and board for two?" asked the groom.

"Six dollars," was the reply.

That was satisfactory, and the two were given a room. When they decided to leave the groom asked for his bill. It was $24. He was staggered.

"What!" he ejaculated, "Twenty-four dollars! That's an outrage. You said $6."

"Six dollars a day," came from the clerk.

"Six dollars a day!"

"Six dollars a day!" the groom almost shouted. "I thought you meant $6 a week."

The clerk simply smiled. Finally the groom paid over the money.

"Now," he said, calming down somewhat, "wait a minute. I want to go upstairs. Keep that money in your hand."

The clerk didn't understand, but he decided to humor the man. The latter soon returned with a camera. Aiming it at the clerk he took a picture.

"This is the highest-priced place I ever stopped at," he explained. "I just wanted a picture to show my friends that I was a real sport here in Denver."

Then he and his bride gathered up their telescopes and went out.

THE DIPTON MYSTERY.

By Will Lisenbee.

AUTHOR OF "DON QUIRON," "THE GEORGIA RIGGSBYS," "THE YOUNG BEE HUNTERS," "THE ADVENTURES OF TOM DAYTON," ETC.

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CHAPTER VI.
BUCK GRIFFIN.

The article picked up by the detective was a small bangle such as are sometimes used as an ornament on a bracelet.

For reasons of his own he said nothing about it to Sethfield. It might give him a clue and it might not. He would wait and see.

After thrusting it into his pocket he continued to examine the bookcase.

But if he discovered anything of interest his face did not show it. Presently he got up and made an inspection of the room, making a careful examination of the windows and the fastenings.

"None of the windows have been opened as far as we could discover," said Sethfield. "The robber, whoever he is, must have affected an entrance by unlocking some of the doors."

Darrell nodded.

"So it seems," he said. "Yet there is one peculiar feature of the robbery."

"What is that?"

"I think you said that the books were taken one or two at a time?"

"Yes, that seems to have been the case."

"Would a thief of the ordinary kind make repeated trips to do a job that might be accomplished by one?"

"By Jove! I should think not."

"Yet the one who has taken the missing books appears to have made a number of visits."

"Yes. I can't understand it."

"Are there any one among the servants who would be likely to know the value of the books?"

"I cannot say. Ezra Drake, the butler, was in Mr. Beasley's confidence, and he likely knows something of their value."

"Any one else?"

"Not a soul. Mrs. Mays don't know a copy of Epitetus from a First Reader. Jed Sellers, the coachman, would not look inside of a book that did not treat of horses, and as for the others, they are all more or less in the same class."

"But some outsider, who had gained a knowledge of the books, might be working through some one who has access to the house."

"There is something in that."

"And that person may return for other books at any time."

"Yes."

"Have you a room close to the library that I might occupy during my stay here?"

"Yes; the sleeping room occupied by Mr. Beasley opens into the library. You will see the door on your left."

"Very well."

"I will have it put in order for you."

"Don't do anything of the kind. None of the servants must know that I remain at the Cypresses tonight."

"Ah, I see."

"I shall return to the Red Stag in a short time, and can you manage to admit me about ten o'clock without my being discovered?"

"Certainly. I will be waiting for you under the big elm back of the house precisely at ten."

"That will do. Suppose we take a little glance over the building, so that I may get a look at the servants?"

"Very well; let us begin at once. It will give you an excellent chance to size up the servants and form some impression of their character."

Darrell followed his host in the make-belief inspection of the building, and it afforded him a good chance to get a look at the servants and at the same time get the lay of the house. He noticed that one of the rear doors had had the lock broken, and the night lock used to fasten it was decidedly insecure.

When they had made the rounds of the house Darrell took his leave and hurried in the direction of the Red Stag.

As he neared the village he espied the shabby figure of a tramp reclining in the shadow of a spreading elm.

He had evidently been asleep, for as Darrell came up he rose quickly, blinking in the glare of the sun.

He was a man of perhaps forty. His garments were shabby and covered with dust, and his low-browed evil face was covered with a grizzly beard of a month's growth.

He removed his hat and stood in a respectful attitude as Darrell drew near.

"Could ye spare a needy sick man a dime?" he asked humbly.

The detective gazed at him critically.

"I think I was the means of giving you—was it six years residence at Sing Sing?" said Darrell.

The eyes of the tramp opened wide with amazement.

"Allan Darrell, the detective, or I'm a Sunday school superintendent!" he gasped.

"What are you up to, hanging around here, Buck Griffin?" demanded Darrell.

"Don't speak that name so loud," pleaded the tramp. "You'll have these hayseed constables after me an' they'd sp'il my vacation."

"Have you forgotten that you are wanted for that little job in East River?"

"Say, now, ye ain't here to pinch me fer that, are ye?"

"That will depend."

"On what?"

"That you tell me the truth."

"What about?"

"What's your game at Dipton?"

"I tell you, Darrell, I ain't doin' no business now. Just out fer a little rest an' a breath of fresh air."

"Don't try to deceive me. You have tried that before."

"I ain't tryin' to make no sneak on anything—honest Injun."

"Do you aim to stick to that?"

"Mr. Darrell, it is the truth."

"So you have said."

"I swear it."

"You have sworn to things before this."

The tramp wiped the perspiration from his face and surveyed the detective with an injured air.

"Why is it you won't believe me?" he asked.

"Because I know when you are lying. You are lying now. Come, tell me what your game is."

"I have told you. I ain't up ter no game."

"Very well. I'll have to hand you over to the law."

The tramp's face showed signs of mental distress.

"You were down here about two months ago," said the detective.

"I owns that all right."

"Oh, I know all about it. One of the reporters who came here to write up the murder case saw you."

"I don't deny it."

"You had a job planned at the time. What was it?"

"But I never did the job, I swear it."

"No, you didn't. But why? Tell me that."

"The thing miscarried."

"That is not all. Why did it miscarry?"

"I lost my nerve."

"That is not all. You were seen in this neighborhood on the night of the murder."

"What if I was?"

"Buck Griffin," said the detective, fixing his gaze on the other, "you know something about the murder of Fenton Gurlock, and you must tell what you know."

CHAPTER VII.
BY THE ROADSIDE.

Buck Griffin's face turned a shade paler.

"You don't mean that—that I was in on that job?" he gasped.

"You know something about it—more than you are willing to tell," replied Darrell.

"How do you know?" asked Buck uneasily, shifting his eyes from the detective's keen gaze.

"There is no use beating about the bush, Buck. I know you better than you know yourself. I have already had a tip about your game, and you had just as well tell me the rest."

"Who has been peachin'?"

"You ought to know."

"No, I don't."

"You had better think again."

"You're on the wrong track, Darrell."

"Not I. Do you remember 'Slippery Tim'?"

A bitter oath was the reply.

Darrell laughed softly.

"You know he was run in about a week ago?"

"I'll be cussed if I did."

"I had a little interview with him, and he put me onto some of your curves. Come, don't waste time. Have you found your man yet?"

Buck Griffin squatted down and leaned his back against the tree.

"Tim didn't know a thing," he said desperately.

"Better tell me the whole story, Buck, for I'm going to have it out of you before I leave you."

"If I tell you, you'll go and spile my game."

"You don't know what I will do."

"It won't be the first time you have put me on the hog train."

"Nor the last, if you don't put me next to this game of yours. You know who killed Fenton Gurlock."

"Are you here at work on that case?"

"Never mind. That is my affair. You must tell me who it was that killed Fenton Gurlock."

"I don't know."

"Then tell me all you do know."

"You say Slippery Tim told you."

"He told me part, you must tell me the est."

"I know nothing more to tell."

"It will pay you to be on the square with me."

"I know it, Darrell. You're white, and if ever I'd open my mouth for any one it would be Allan Darrell."

"None of your bouquets, Buck. This is straight business. Come, tell me the whole story."

"Well, I guess the game's up, anyway, so I haven't anything to lose."

"I am glad to see you coming to your senses. Go on."

"There's not much to tell. I saw the chap that put this Gurlock out of business."

"Who was he?"

"I don't know."

"You don't?"

"On my life."

"Then tell me what you do know."

"Well, as I'm at it I'll tell you how it was. I was down here on a little job of my own. It was the night of the murder. A pal of mine was to join me, but he flunked at the last moment and I could not do the job alone.

"I saw this Gurlock get off the train at Dipton station about dark. He stopped at the Red Stag for a while, where he registered, I think, as Bates. Then he went away, as far as I could learn, but no one knew where. I was hangin' round keepin' sort of shady, waitin' for my friend to show up when I saw some one in the road before me. I went toward him and saw that he was standing over some one lyin' in the road.

"As I came up the man saw me and hit the grit out of there. Then I saw that there had been murder done and I lit out."

"Did you see the murderer's face?"

"Yes, for the moon was shining."

"Can you describe him?"

"He was a good looking chap, well-dressed and stylish looking. No common crook, I take it."

"Would you know him if you saw him?"

"Sure."

"Have you seen him since that night?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"In New York."

"Did you speak to him?"

"No."

"Where did he go?"

"He crossed to Jersey and I followed him, hoping to run him to his lair, but he dodged me."

"Did he leave Jersey City?"

"I found out afterwards that he did."

"Where did he go?"

"I am not sure, but as far as I could discover, he must have come to Dipton."

"And you are here looking for him?"

"I don't have to answer that question. I claim my constitutional rights."

Darrell laughed.

"All right," he nodded. "I won't press the point. But he was well dressed, you say?"

"Elegant, and wore a diamond ring."

"You thought he might come down in a handsome manner to stop your mouth if you got a word with him?"

"We object," protested Buck, with a grin.

"Very well. You have a pretty good idea that the fellow is in this locality?"

"I have got it in my mind that way."

"If you run onto him—what then?"

"I am not a detective."

"You must think it would pay as well as blackmail?"

"There is no reward offered, is there?"

"No, but it might pay you to be on the square once in a while."

"I am not fool enough to be a crook when it would pay the same salary to be straight.

"There may be something handsome in this case, and when the game is run to cover I'll find out what you have done, and it will pay you to be on the right side."

"I guess you are right. I never did go in a game against you yet but I wished I hadn't."

"And you're not likely to. Here's something to keep you out of the temptation to beat some one out of a meal."

He dropped a five-dollar bill in the tramp's hand.

"Don't get drunk now," added Darrell. "Go and fill yourself up on decent grub. I'll see you again. I'm stopping at the Red Stag, and may be casting a line along the creek during the hot season."

Buck Griffin seized the bill and pressed it to his lips.

"That's a sweetheart that never goes back on a fellow," he said. "Allan Darrell, your generosity I shall never forget. It is such kindness as this that makes a fellow want to be straight."

But Allan Darrell was walking rapidly down the road in the direction of the Red Stag.

CHAPTER VIII.
AN ERASURE.

"What luck?" asked the landlord of the Red Stag as Allan Darrell entered the inn.

"The usual luck that falls to fishermen," replied the detective with a smile. "I might have had better luck, but the truth is, I was rambling around and fell into the company of an idle fellow who persuaded me that it was too hot to fish."

"I don't know but he was right," nodded Rushton. "It's a heap pleasanter sitting in the shade here."

After supper Darrell sat for a while smoking a cigar on the veranda, where he was joined by Rushton, who was fond of having some one to talk to.

"I should like to look over those articles that belonged to the man who was murdered," said Darrell.

"All right," nodded Rushton, "they are all in the little room below that I use for my private office."

He led the way to the room, followed by the detective.

There were a few chairs, a cheap desk, a bookcase half-filled with books on miscellaneous subjects, and a sort of closet in the corner.

From the closet Rushton brought a valise, which he said had belonged to the murdered man. It contained a few articles of wearing apparel of good quality. There was a silver watch, a French novel, a pair of low shoes, a box half-filled with cigars and some other articles. In addition to these, there were the clothes worn by the deceased when he met his death.

An examination of the clothes proved them to be of English make and bore the name of a London tailoring establishment.

Darrell made a careful examination of the garments worn by the deceased at the time of his death, and especially was his attention drawn to certain garments.

When he was through with the work he returned to the veranda with the landlord where they talked of the tragic incident over their cigars.

"That Henry Bates, as he signed himself," remarked the landlord, "was a queer sort of chap as one would meet in a long time."

"In what way?" asked Darrell.

"He seemed ill at ease, and paced the floor of his room like one half mad."

"Did you talk with him?"

"Not much. He asked a good many questions about the town and the people. I thought he might be wanting to invest in property in the neighborhood."

"Can you remember of his inquiring about any particular person?"

"He never mentioned any names. He asked me for a list of the names of the well-to-do people of the village and immediate neighborhood."

"Did you give him a list?"

"Yes."

"Can you remember what it was?"

"Why, yes, for he did not take the paper away, but left it lying on the table in his room."

"Will you let me see the list?"

"Certainly."

Rushton went into the house and soon returned with the paper, which he gave to the detective.

Darrell glanced over it and thrust it into his pocket.

"I will kep it if you don't mind," he said.

"All right. I have no use for it."

"You saw a sailor here some little time ago—Jason Frew—who was making inquiries about the murdered man?"

"Oh, yes. He said the man's name was Fenton Gurlock."

"Yes."

"And I suppose that was his real name."

"I suppose so. Did he register when he came to the inn?"

"Yes."

"Will you show me the register?"

"In a moment."

Rushton brought the register and turned to the leaves till he came to the date of June 14th.

"Here it is," he said. "You will see that it is signed 'Henry Bates.'"

"It is written with pencil," said Darrell, "and with a hasty and nervous hand. Hello!" he added, looking closer to the page.

"What is it?" asked Rushton.

"Did you notice the erasure right under the word 'Henry?'"

"No, I didn't."

"If you will look very closely you will see the letters 'Fen' very dim under the capital H."

"By Jenks! that is so," exclaimed Rushton as he scanned the signature closely. "What do you make of that?"

"He had evidently started to write his true name, and on second thought wrote a fictitious one."

"Well, I'll be blowed! That is right."

"He didn't give any intimation as to whether he intended to remain in Dipton, did he?"

"No, not a word did he say about his business."

"There has been no person who witnessed the killing of Bates or Gurlock found?"

"None as far as I know."

"There could be no possibility of suicide?"

"No; for there was no weapon near nor was any found about the body."

"I think the shot that caused death penetrated the brain."

"That was what the inquest showed."

"Has there been any new developments in the case since the inquest?"

"Nothing excepting the story told by Jason Frew—about the murdered man being a friend of his and his name being Gurlock instead of Bates, all of which you know."

"Are you acquainted with Mr. Reginald Sethfield, who lives at the Cypresses?"

"I am not. In fact, I have never seen him to my knowledge. He has been here but a short time. Is he an acquaintance of yours?"

"Yes; I made his acquaintance in the city. I have an appointment with him this evening, and may remain at the Cypresses all night."

Night had already fallen when Darrell left the inn and walked leisurely along the wooded road in the direction of the Cypresses. It was a breathless night, with the blazing stars just beginning to grow pale under the broader light of the rising moon.

Darrell drank in the damp coolness of the night air and in the liquid notes of the birds that came from the dark woods.

The droning, monotonous hum of insects

made a drowsy accompaniment to the voices of the night, and the black shadows fell like patches of ink along the winding road.

As Allan Darrell walked along the shadowy road he was thinking, but not of the mystery that surrounded the murder of Fenton Gurlock, nor of the puzzling affair at the Cypresses, but of a sweet, oval face that came before his mental vision and crowded out all other thoughts—the face of Katharine Hope.

He had seen many beautiful women in his life—those who dazzled by their beauty, but somehow they had lacked that nameless charm and witching personality that drew him to Katharine Hope.

He threw out his hand with an impatient gesture.

"What the deuce is coming over me?" he muttered. "Am I losing my wits over a pretty face? No, by Jove, it isn't her beauty alone—it is something deeper than looks—something that I have never known before. What a fool I am making of myself. She even tries to avoid me, and still I go thinking of her. I wonder what she would think of me if she knew."

CHAPTER IX.

THE MIDNIGHT VISITOR.

It was precisely ten o'clock when Allan Darrell entered the back gate of the garden at the Cypresses.

As he approached the spreading elm Sethfield emerged from the dark shadows and came to meet him.

"Ah, you are on time to a dot," he said in an undertone. "The servants have all retired, and we shall have no difficulty in avoiding their discovery of your presence.

"From all I can discover," went on Sethfield as he led the way to a rustic seat under the shadow of the elm, "it seems that the thief is some one staying beneath the roof of the Cypresses."

"Have you not kept watch?" asked Darrell.

"Yes, but nothing has come of it."

"Have you arrived at any theory as to who it is?"

"I have not the least idea. But I hope you will be able to solve the problem. When I have kept watch the servants have probably been on their guard, and so I have found out nothing. With you keeping watch it will be different."

"There are mysteries of crime that never come to light," remarked Darrell, "despite every effort of the shrewdest detectives. For instance, there was a murder committed in this neighborhood some two months ago, and as far as I have heard, nothing has been discovered that would give a clue as to who committed the deed."

"That was a most mysterious affair," agreed Sethfield. "Were you employed on the case?"

"There was no reward," said Darrell, "and a private detective is not likely to spend his time for mere glory."

"I can see where you are right," said Sethfield. "The fellow was a stranger here, it seems. I have heard that he registered at the Inn under some name that proved to have been assumed."

"Were you here at the time of the murder?"

"It happened the very day of my arrival, if I remember aright. Well, the old saying that 'murder will out' don't seem to hold good in this instance."

They continued in conversation for a half hour when Darrell was conducted into the room next to the library, where Sethfield bade him good night and went to his own room.

The room in which Darrell found himself was comfortably—almost sumptuously—furnished. The window was open to admit the slight breeze from without, and having extinguished the light, the detective drew an easy chair before the window and seated himself.

He had left the door which led into the library partly ajar, so that he might detect any intruder.

The moon which was now riding high in the heavens threw a mellow light through the high windows into the library, cutting sharply through the gloom of the interior.

Allan Darrell was thinking deeply. There was something about the mysterious disappearance of the books that puzzled him, Who was the guilty one?

The theory that the thefts were committed by some one connected with the house seemed plausible enough. No thief of the professional kind who knew the value of books would risk taking a single volume at a time, when a chance discovery of the loss might cut off all chance of securing the others.

It was easy to reason that out. Then he thought of the little trinket he had picked up in the bookcase.

It was a small gold bangle as are sometimes used on a bracelet. Would it furnish a clue to the guilty one?

He was determined to keep it in his possession till he could discover the owner. Until that was done he would say nothing about it.

Would the mysterious robber return during the night? Darrell was determined to keep watch.

He cautiously moved his chair near the open door leading into the library, and composing himself therein, waited.

For a long time he was keenly on the alert. The building was silent as the grave, and only the sound of some night birds in the grove broke the oppressive silence.

Presently a drowsiness came over him, and despite his every effort to resist it, he fell asleep.

How long he slept he could not tell. He was disturbed by something, and in an instant was wide awake.

He listened but could hear nothing. But something had awakened him. What was it?

He rose cautiously from his chair and approached the open door. As he peered into the library he could see objects but indistinctly.

The moon was now obscured by passing clouds and only a dim uncertain light entered the room.

Allan Darrell bent his head and listened intently.

As he did so a faint sound, like the rustling of a garment, came to his ears. The sound proceeded from the far end of the library, near the door which opened into the hallway at the foot of the stair leading to the upper story.

The detective was on the alert in a moment, and stooping low, he thrust his head through the opening and let his eyes sweep the far end of the library.

But the shadows lay so thickly that he could see nothing but the dim and indistinct shapes of articles of furniture.

For some moments he stood crouching in silence, on the alert for every sound.

Presently he heard the faint noise of footsteps. It was so faint that it was hardly to be distinguished above the low soughing of the night wind without.

And now he could discern the shadowy outlines of a figure moving from the far end of the library.

Darrell watched it with bated breath.

Was he now about to solve the mystery of the stolen books?

Crouching breathless, he watched and waited. The figure, still shadowy and indistinct, moved slowly across the library.

As it drew nearer Darrell could make out the shape more distinctly, and he drew a quick breath as he recognized the draped figure of a woman.

There was a strange fluttering at his heart, and it seemed that he could hear its tumultuous beating.

In the darkness it was impossible to recognize the figure, but that it was a woman there was no doubt.

All went to prove this; the size, grace of movement as well as the garments.

Nearer and nearer came the figure of the

"Buck Griffin, you know something about the murder."

midnight visitor, her bare feet falling almost noiselessly as she glided past.

A light shawl enveloped the head and shoulders, and from under this escaped a few dark locks of hair.

She passed by the door and glided straight towards the bookcase in which the precious volumes were kept.

With noiseless steps Allan Darrell crept through the door and followed noiselessly, a strange fluttering at his heart.

Strange thoughts were in his brain. There was something familiar in the very movement and figure of the woman that caused his thoughts to take a bewildering turn. His senses reeled in a maze of perplexity, of uncertainty, vague and indefinable.

The figure of the woman now paused before the bookcase and for a moment stood as if listening.

Hardly daring to breathe, filled with a thousand curious emotions, Allan Darrell stood ensconced behind the library table and watched and waited.

This dramatic story will be continued in next week's Ledger, presenting the readers with some very startling episodes and situations. Its perusal to the end will highly reward you. If you are not a subscriber to the Ledger, you are strongly advised to send in the price of subscription at once. If you do so, we will be glad to send you free one of our King Cameras or any six patterns you may select from our pattern page. Look at our advertisemnts on pages thirteen and fifteen.

"In union there is strength," remarked the man with the quotation habit.

"That's right," rejoined Empeck, sadly. "But the strength isn't equally distributed."

The Stage Driver.

Ethelbert Talbot, new bishop of Central Pennsylvania, and for years the bishop of Wyoming and Idaho in the early days of that region, tells the following:

It both pleased and amused him to notice that the stage-drivers—a class accustomed to the use of free profanity—were wont to be respectful and clean-spoken in his presence, and that when one by chance let slip an oath he followed it by profuse apologies; and he gives an illustrative anecdote from the experiences of Bishop Clarkson on the plains of Nebraska.

"It seems that on one occasion the bishop was due to preach at a certain town on the prairies of Nebraska. It was in the spring, and the mud was up to the hubs in places. Already it was growing dark, and the lights of the village which the bishop was trying to reach seemed still a long way off. He became a little nervous lest he should be late for his appointment. Just then they encountered a mud hole, and the stage coach stuck fast. The driver laid on the lash; but in vain; the horses would not move. The bishop was on the box with the driver, who was getting desperate. Unable to stand it longer, he turned to the bishop, and said:

"'Do you see those wheelers looking back at me?'

"'Yes, Harry. What does that mean?'

"'Bishop, you know I have always tried to treat you right, and I respect your cloth. But do you say you want to preach in that there town tonight?'

"'Of course I do, Harry. Why don't you whip your horses?'

"'Whip 'em, Bishop! Ain't I been a-whippin' of 'em my level best? Do you say that you must preach there tonight?'

"'Of course I must.'

"'Well, Bishop, I ask it just once. You see these horses are used to my style of talkin' to 'em. I know it's a bad habit, and I know it's wrong, but will you please give me a dispensation just this one time? If you will, I'll get you there or bust. What do you say, Bishop?'

"The bishop felt the case to be extreme.

"'Well, Harry, I suppose I'll have to. Fire away this one time.'

"Harry ripped out an oath, and the horses got down on their haunches, cleared the mud hole, and landed the bishop in town just in time to keep his appointment."

Proved He Was Up to Date.

A young reporter was given an assignment to write the obituary of a prominent Western pioneer. He wrote as follows:

"Citizens of this State will be very much grieved to learn that Uncle Joseph Hawley has been gathered to his fathers. He had been confined to his bed for three months with a serious ailment, and while hope was entertained that he would recover, his death was not altogether unexpected.

"Thus is another well-known pioneer the victim of the grim reaper, and another sturdy spirit has crossed the range."

The city editor remonstrated, with more than ordinary patience. "You'd better write this over again, my boy," he said. "Don't use so many old expressions. Try to keep everything new and up-to-date. Don't use so many hackneyed phrases. Originality is what we want."

The young reporter seized upon his task with avidity. Presently he approached the city editor's desk, and breathlessly laid his second effort upon it. This is what he had written:

"Everybody will shed tears when they hear that Josh Hawley has joined his ancestors. He has been about all in for nearly three months, and while a good many people kept kidding themselves with the idea that he would get well, it was a cinch he had to go."

"Thus is another of the old boys mowed down, and another soul has bored a tunnel through the great divide."—Puck.

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She Meant Well.

Some little while ago a popular writer visited a jail in order to take notes for a magazine article on prison life.

On returning home he described the horrors he had seen, and his description made a deep impression on the mind of his little daughter Mary.

The writer and his offspring, a week later, were in a train together, which stopped at a station near a gloomy building. A man asked:

"What place is that?"

"The county jail," another answered, promptly.

Whereupon Mary embarrassed her father by asking in a loud, shrill voice:

"Is that the jail you were in, father?"

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"I like simplicity," said Senator Beveridge. "Simplicity saves us a lot of trouble, too.

"Two men met in front of the Blank Hotel and fell into a political argument. They were ordinary, everyday sort of men, but one of them had an extraordinary flow of polysyllable language. He talked half an hour, and his companion listened in a daze.

"'And now,' the speaker pompously concluded, 'perhaps you will coincide with me.'

The other's face brightened up.

"'Why, yes, thanks, old man,' he answered heartily, moving toward the barroom door, 'I don't care if I do.'"

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Anxious Mother—You can't do any better than marry young De Scads, my dear. He is an only son and his father is very wealthy.

Pretty Daughter—But I don't love him, mamma, and, besides, his father is a widower and may marry again.

Anxious Mother—True, my dear; I never thought of that. Perhaps you had better marry his father.

A Dainty Little Maid.

Every one ought to have her. She is dressed in pretty colors and changes the color of her skirt herself when it is going to rain. She indicates when it is wise to take an umbrella or when you can do without. She is the simplest and best of barometers. She is an ornament, a good seller for agents, a pretty gift, a good business souvenir and useful to any one. She or one of her sisters comes postpaid with full directions for only 10 cents. W. P. Randolph & Co., 78 Dearborn St., Chicago.

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While seated at the breakfast table a letter bearing the card of a law firm in a distant city was handed to the head of the matrimonial combine.

"Great guns!" he exclaimed, excitedly, as he perused it. "I have just fallen heir to $500,000."

"That's good," calmly rejoined the wife of his bosom. "Now we can begin to take ice."

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A womanly woman has no earthly use for a ladies' man.

Some people even pride themselves on their lack of pride.

You can't always judge what a man was by what his monument is.

The better acquainted a man is with himself the harder it is to fool him.

Running for office costs almost as much as running an automobile.

Too many men attempt to make an arc-light show on a kerosene income.

Men who are bald always sneer at the man who parts his hair in the middle.

Some men do not care to take vacation trips because wives insist on going along.

At any rate the Standard Oil Company will not have to work out its fine on the rock pile.

When a man is compelled to eat his words he finds it difficult to swallow his indignation.

Instead of trying to mend their ways some men could save a lot of time by hustling for a new supply.

If a man is too lazy to make hay while the sun shines he usually has to borrow an umbrella when it rains.

We have no reason to believe that the Lord loves a cheerful giver who advertises his character broadcast.

When a man calls his wife "honey" the explanation is that it keeps him as busy as a bee supplying her wants.

Tall travelers should trek to Texas. The nine-foot sheet law for the regulation of hotel beds is in operation there.

If Mr. Roosevelt will look again he may be able to see some undesirable citizens among the Western mine owners.

A physician says that worry makes people thin, but it doesn't seem to effect fat women who worry over their fatness.

Traveling on a railroad train at two cents a mile may not be cheaper than walking, but it is much more satisfactory.

King Edward must be getting so used to the honor that by this time he is not embarrassed in the presence of J. Pierpont Morgan.

Mr. Roosevelt may have to take the job of building the Panama canal when his present job expires to demonstrate to the world that it can be done.

San Salvador has given a subsidy of $5,000,000 to an American company to build a railroad across it. San Salvador may as well say good-by to revolutions. A railroad company of that size will see to it that the country is peaceably governed.

A YOUNG GIRL'S PERIL;

OR,

The Wellington Jewels.

By T. C. HARBAUGH, author of "Robespierre," "Alice of Maryland," "Bluebell's Secret," etc.

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CHAPTER IX.

A TROUBLESOME SECRET.

Eudora Wellington did just what Paul Partland might have expected her to do. She told the authorities about the return of the pear-shaped pearl which belonged to her famous collection of jewels.

The young man did not think of this till it was too late.

The police would look for him; they would seek to draw from him his story of the finding of the jewel and, if he told it, it would only tighten the coil about Vestal.

How foolish it was for him to do what he had done.

Why did he not keep the jewel? He had acted on the impulse of the moment and without second thought, had carried it to its owner, who would, as would be natural, carry the story of its recovery to the authorities.

It was too late now; the deed was done.

While Lloyd Vanderbeck was having his startling interview with Madame Zenobia, the sorceress, Paul might have been seen ascending a flight of steps that led to the room of one Salmon Search, one of the keenest private detectives in the city.

They were old friends and Paul had resolved to tell his story to the human ferret.

He found Salmon Search alone.

After the first greetings Paul began with his narrative. He told all, from his spirited interview with the Gold Wolf to the restoration of the pearl.

The detective listened with the closest attention, saying nothing till the last word had dropped from the narrator's lips.

"Well," said Salmon Search, "don't you think you've got the girl in a pretty pickle?"

Paul acknowledged that he had.

"Not only this, but they will be looking for you as well."

"I see that, fool that I was!"

"Of course. One does not go over the whole ground all the time. He is a little hasty."

Both men were silent for a little time.

"What do you think?" suddenly asked Paul.

"Mrs. Wellington is a slick one."

"Oh, I do not mean that," was the reply. "What do you think about the jewel case?"

"You know, Paul, that I am not much given to expressing my opinion."

"Yes, I know that."

"It looks pretty black for Vestal."

"They shall not get from me the true story of the finding of the pearl."

"You mean that to shield the girl you will go to jail?"

"With my life if need me!"

"I see," said the detective. "They will give you a good deal of trouble and some irritating notoriety. It will not be very pleasant."

"But I will keep my secret all the same," and Paul's lips met firmly behind the last word.

"The girl must have some strong reason for keeping herself concealed," remarked the detective.

"She is overwhelmed with shame, judging from the tone of her last letter."

"So it would seem. You say you searched the city for her?"

"Until I have almost despaired. I have even put a "personal" in the papers asking her in ambiguous language, but which she would readily understand, to communicate with me again. But up till this time I have no word from her."

"We must try another plan."

"You do not think that she is guilty?"

"The whole city thinks she is."

"Yes, for the world is against her, but I would wager my life on Vestal's innocence."

"Of course," smiled the detective, "that is natural under the circumstances."

"Do you think Vanderbeck took the gems?" asked Paul as, he leaned forward with eagerness depicted on his countenance.

"Why, that man is worth his millions," said Salmon Search. "Why should he seek to add to them by robbery, especially the robbery of that which would be most difficult to dispose of? Mrs. Wellington's jewels are almost as well known as the crown jewels of England. It would be the height of folly for a man like Vanderbeck to take away like that."

"Then, in the name of common sense, who did steal them?"

"Now you are only deepening the mystery," smiled the detective. "It puzzles the whole force of us so much as who took the gems but what has become of the girl, Vestal Cummings."

Paul said nothing for some time. Salmon Search quietly puffed at his cigar and seemed to have dropped into a deep study.

"You will look into the matter?" said the young man at last. "What is your advice?"

"If you find any more jewels don't take them to Eudora Wellington."

"Oh, I've had my fill of that bit of folly," was the reply.

Paul rose to go.

"By the way," said Salmon Search, suddenly looking up, "You will keep out of the way of the police for they know that you took the pearl to its owner."

"You know this?"

"Yes. They are looking for you at this moment."

Paul shuddered at the thought of falling into the hands of the law just when he desired to keep out.

"I won't go home then," said he.

"I would not. Home is a dangerous place for you at this time."

Bidding the detective good night, he slipped from the room and went down upon the street.

His mind was a sea of conflicting thoughts.

Already he felt the net of the law over him. It would break his search for Vestal. What a fool he had been, to be sure. If he had but reflected a moment he would not now be under this perplexing shadow.

Looking carefully about him he hurried off.

Half an hour later he dropped into a little chop-house which he never frequented and sat at one of the most inconspicuous tables.

He wanted time for reflection.

As he quietly discussed the meal he did reflect. What had become of Vestal? Why had she not communicated with him again? Was the humiliation and shame so deep? She must have known that he did not believe her guilty. He could never do that after her declaration of innocence.

"There is some news about the mystery of the stolen jewels," said a voice not far away.

Paul dared not turn his head, but he listened most intently.

"What is new in that direction, Jack?"

"Haven't you seen the papers? No? Well, one of the missing jewels has been restored to its owner."

"By whom?"

"By a fellow who gave his name as Partland. He would not tell where he found it. It is the supposition that he is a go-between the thief and the rich woman and that the jewels will be restored for a consideration."

"And they let the Partland fellow get away?"

"Yes. Mrs. Wellington was alone when he brought the gem and he made off with his secret."

There was a little laugh at this and Paul shivered.

He dared not look at the two men at the adjoining table. A look would condemn him. Perhaps there was a reward for his arrest.

He finished his meal as quickly as possible, paid his score and went away.

He was a hunted man now. The minions of the law were scouring the city for him. They wanted the man who had brought the jewel to Eudora Wellington. It seemed to him when he again found himself on the street that voices were calling: "Here he goes." "That man is Paul Partland, the fool." Surely, he heard footsteps behind him.

Casting about him for a place of safety he glided off. He hoped the shadows would hide him. He wondered why some one did not lay hands on him and hale him to prison.

But they should not wrest the secret from him; they should not worm from him the story of the finding of the pear-shaped pearl.

At last he paused in front of a little hotel which he had seen but never entered. It was not the most respectable place in the world, but he was not captious at that moment.

Entering, he registered under an assumed name and asked for a bed. He was shown to a poor room where he locked the door and threw himself upon a cot without disrobing.

Suddenly he started up. There were footsteps in the corridor.

"Open the door!" said a gruff voice outside.

Paul's heart went with a bound into his throat.

"They have found me," he said.

CHAPTER X.

MRS. WELLINGTON ENTERTAINS.

When Paul opened the door he found himself face to face with two men.

"Good evening," said one. "You are Paul Partland?"

"What if I am?"

"We want you."

"For what?"

Paul needed not to have put that query. He knew why the men were there.

"We guess it's no use to answer that question," was the reply. "If you are Paul Partland you know why you are wanted."

"I'm ready," said the young man. "You are secret service men?"

"Yes."

They escorted him downstairs and in a little while he was walking away between the men.

Paul was escorted to the headquarters of the police and was there confronted with his identity which he did not deny.

"What is the charge against me?" he asked of the uniformed officer who occupied a raised chair.

"You are arrested for being concerned in the robbery of Lloyd Vanderbeck's safe and with concealing the gems belonging to Mrs. Eudora Wellington of Billion avenue."

Paul broke into a laugh.

"You took one of the stolen jewels back to the owner, did you not?"

"I took a pearl to her."

"Where did you get it?"

"I found it."

The few persons in the room exchanged significant glances.

"Where did you find it?" demanded the officer.

"I decline to tell."

Paul answered firmly and with deliberation.

"We'll have to lock you up," continued the man in the chair. "You refuse to tell where you got the gem?"

"I do."

Ten minutes later the young man was reflecting in one of the cells of the Central Station.

The expected had happened. He had gotten himself into the hands of the police and the outcome he could not guess. In the morning the story of his arrest would appear in the newspapers and the whole town would know that Paul Partland, a young man until then bearing a good character, was suspected of being in league with crime, and his best friends would desert him.

It was a most unenviable situation.

While he reflected in the dark cell he did not know what was taking place in another part of the city.

He could not look beyond the walls of his narrow place and penetrate the beautiful home on Billion avenue.

Eudora Wellington was alone in her parlor. The brilliant lights revealed her portly figure to advantage and she looked like a queen of society surrounded by wealth and everything that would have made one happy.

It was a little beyond her bedtime and she had been looking over some papers which she had taken from a secret drawer in her cabinet.

At last she folded the last paper and yawned.

A footstep came down the hall and stopped at the door.

It was not the maid who was to help her to bed for she had left word that the girl should not come till called.

Eudora Wellington looked up and fixed her startled gaze on the door.

"Come in," said she with a little tremble in her tones.

The door opened and the next moment the rich woman uttered a cry that died quickly on her lip.

The man who wore a mask that concealed one-half of his face was at her side.

"Not a word, madame," said he in low but emphatic tones. "You will summon no one if you value your life."

The woman's face which had grown white was upturned to the man and she felt her heart sink to immeasurable depths in her bosom.

"You've got some papers that I want," continued the man.

"Papers?"

"Yes. You have what is known as the Donnixetti Story."

"How do you know?"

"Never mind that. I want those papers."

"But I cannot——"

"Oh, yes, you can, madame. I want those papers."

"Has he discovered——"

"I don't know. I want the Donnixetti papers. Come, be quick about it."

"What do you want them for?"

"That's my business."

Eudora Wellington glanced at the call bell within reach and a sudden idea flashed through her mind.

The dark eyes of the man intercepted her look.

"Shall I have them?" he said.

"They are not in this room. I'll go——"

"Very well. Come along, then."

Mrs. Wellington rose and the man stepped back.

"Where are they?" came from the half-hidden lips.

"They're upstairs."

"Up we go, then."

Still white-faced, Eudora Wellington led the way from the parlor and the two mounted the steps together.

Half-way up the millionairess paused and looked at her cool visitor.

"How much is it worth for me to keep those papers?" she asked.

"Do you really mean that?" was the answer.

"Yes, if you are reasonable. How much?"

"More than you want to give, perhaps."

"You have named no sum," said the woman hopefully.

"Very well, I'll take five thousand."

"You're a robber!" cried the rich woman with a sudden gasp. "You must think me the owner of a diamond mine."

"I know you are not just now the owner of the famous Wellington jewels. Ha, ha!"

"What do you know about my stolen jewels?"

"What should I know?"

"They'll find them, for I've got the best detectives in the land after them."

"Good luck to the ferrets," laughed the lips underneath the mask. "But you won't give the five thousand and retain possession of the Donnixetti papers?"

"You ask too much."

"I'll take the papers then."

Mrs. Wellington took a long breath.

"We will go back to the parlor," said she. "It is not necessary to go on upstairs."

They went back to the parlor, the man at the woman's heels like a ferret.

Eudora Wellington opened a little desk that was concealed by a heavy green curtain and took out a large pocketbook.

The scintillating eyes behind the mask watched her closely.

Her jewelled hands counted out ten five-hundred dollar bills which she passed over to her visitor.

The man put them in his pocket and rose to his feet.

"You got off cheap, don't you think?" he said.

"You made the bargain. What if I had utterly refused to comply with your demands?"

"You would have needed the services of an undertaker."

"Merciful Heavens! you wouldn't have gone that far?"

"Indeed, madame, I would have ended the life of Eudora Wellington."

"But what will your employer say."

"My employer?" chuckled the man. "Whom do you think he is?"

"There is but one man in the whole world to whom the Donnixetti papers are of any value and I did not know he was in this country."

"I haven't said that he is," was the reply.

"Put he sent you here tonight and you have sold him out."

There was no answer.

"That's all," said the woman. "You can go."

"One word first," and the man leaned forward till the edge of his mask almost touched the rich one's face.

He uttered four words and the next moment the millionairess gave vent to a little cry and fell back in her chair in a faint that admirably counterfeited death.

"The old sultaress didn't like to hear that!" laughed the masked man, and the next minute the parlor was tenanted by the unconscious woman in silk.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DARK IVORY BOX.

When Eudora Wellington awakened from her swoon she was quite alone.

The mysterious man was gone and the secret of his visit belonged to her.

The Donnixetti papers had been given her by her late husband with the admonition to guard them closely. His last injunction was that they must on no account get out of her possession. They pertained to some strange crime committed across the water and were mysterious to their possessor.

She had carried out her husband's wishes regarding the papers, but now they had been demanded by a masked man who had turned and sold out his employer for five thousand dollars which Eudora was willing to pay in order to keep the precious documents.

She did not know who wanted the papers, but she felt sure that they were valuable to some person else her husband would not have exacted from her an oath that she would watch over them.

The appearance of the masked man excited the woman's curiosity and she was eager to discover who had sent him on his singular errand. Therefore the next day she might have been seen entering the house occupied by Zenobia, the sorceress.

It was not the first time she had crossed the threshold of this queen of the black arts; she had gone thither several times prior to the theft of the jewels.

The long day was near its close and the millionairess sat in one of Zenobia's chairs while the eyes of the seeress were fastened upon her.

In an adjoining room lay Vestal Cummings asleep, for the fair girl had heard of Paul's arrest through the newspapers and, overcome, had been persuaded by Zenobia to take some needed rest.

Zenobia was asked by Eudora to solve the mystery of her last visitor and the fortune teller was going through some cabalistic incantations in which there was a good deal of humbuggery when Vestal roused from her slumbers.

The young girl was startled by the hum of voices in the next room and, tiptoeing to the door, heard some things not intended for her ears.

She almost uttered a cry when she discovered that Zenobia's visitor was the famous Eudora Wellington, the owner of the lost jewels, and for a moment she trembled with her hand on the knob.

"I must see that woman face to face!" cried Vestal. "She shall know that I never touched her gems. I will tell her to her teeth and take the consequences."

Thereupon the girl opened the door and stood before the astonished inmates of the room.

A frown came to Zenobia's face, but the deed was done and it was too late to clear the room of her fair charge for she had already caught the eye of the millionairess.

"And who is this?" exclaimed Eudora, adjusting her gold glasses for a study of Vestal's face.

"I am Miss Cummings," was the prompt reply by the girl herself before the seeress could interpose a word. "I am the person accused of stealing the Wellington jewels."

Eudora fairly gasped.

"So you're the hussy?" she cried. "You're the person who is wanted by the police for taking my gems from the Vanderbeck safe? Well, of all the brazen confrontations I ever heard of this one is the coolest."

Vestal advanced until she stood directly in front of the glaring woman.

"Perhaps it has never occurred to you, Mrs. Wellington, that I might be innocent."

"It never has," frankly admitted the millionairess. "Innocent people don't hide from the police. That's quite plain, miss."

"You do not know human nature," said Vestal. "You can accuse and the word of people in your rank weighs more nowadays than that of one in the humble position I occupy."

At this Mrs. Wellington turned to Zenobia and said:

"I did not think, madame, that you would shelter a person of this character. Your action, to say the least, is quite reprehensible. You should hand that girl over to the police."

"Not while she is under my roof," and the dark eyes of the seeress snapped.

"You compromise with crime, then?" haughtily said the rich woman. "I shall do that myself."

"When?" queried Zenobia.

"Now!"

Eudora Wellington was on her feet, her face pale but full of excitement and her ample bosom rose and fell like the waters of a boisterous sea.

"Sit down," said Zenobia calmly as she fastened her gaze upon Eudora.

"Not until I have given the police the clue so unexpectedly thrown across my path."

"Madame, you will not retire until I open the door for you," and Zenobia reached the woman's side and halted there. "You have never thought for a moment that you fair child may be as innocent as a babe of the charge against her. She acknowledges having seen your jewels, but not that she took them."

"But my friend Lloyd Vanderbeck assures me that he and that girl are the only persons familiar with the combination of the private safe."

"Lloyd Vanderbeck?" and the name fell from Zenobia's lips with a well-cut sneer.

"The banker of Gold street, you know."

"I know him. He is rightly called the Gold Wolf. You have trusted him."

"Why not? Is he not the pink of honesty?"

"We will not discuss that proposition," replied Zenobia. "I think you owe Miss Cummings an apology."

"What? An apology?" almost roared the rich woman as she turned two colors at the same time, "Eudora Wellington apologize to the hussy who stole her gems? You will hear from me later on."

She gathered up her robes and gave Vestal a look that would have killed had it been an arrow.

"You must hear me!" exclaimed the young girl as she darted forward. "I have made up my mind to face the world and its infamous charge. But first, Mrs. Wellington, you shall listen to me."

"What would you say? Remember that any confession spoken in my hearing shall be used against you."

"I have nothing to confess. 'Tis the guilty alone who confess. I have seen your jewels, I have even had them on the blotter in Vanderbeck's private office, but he was present. I knew not the combination of the private safe. That was entrusted to me by my late employer. Now, what I want to say is if you will get the truth out of a certain person you will probably come forward with the apology you have just refused."

"Come! This is not to the point. You are going to charge some one else with the crime to shield yourself. I will not listen. You will kindly let me out, Madame Zenobia."

The seeress did not move. She stood between Eudora and the door and saw the dark look she received from the millionairess.

"I will not listen to the girl. She can tell her story to the police."

"No, first to you," said Vestal. "Go and ask Park Knowles for the truth."

"Gerald Knowles' son?"

"Yes. The black sheep of the family."

"It won't do, miss. You cannot shift the crime upon the shoulders of my old friend."

With this Eudora moved toward the door and Zenobia, watching her still, drew aside.

"Wait a moment," said the seeress. "This is getting interesting. Madame Wellington, you will please accept this at my hands before you depart."

Zenobia took from a little table near at hand a small box of dark ivory which she extended with her brown hand.

Eudora looked first at the box and then at the seeress, drawing back a step with a perceptible shudder of aversion.

"What is it?" she asked.

"A gift from the flitted years—an echo of the past."

Eudora took the box and drew toward the light that enmeshed her ponderous figure against the opposite wall.

Her finger seemed to find a certain spring in the lid of the box and it flew open.

The next moment she uttered a cry and, with the box shaking in her hand, she looked at Zenobia as guilty as a murderer will look on the day of judgment.

CHAPTER XII.

VESTAL'S PERIL DEEPENS.

The box fell from Eudora Wellington's hands.

It landed on the floor at Zenobia's feet and that strange creature looked down at at it for a moment.

"What, do you not want the gift?" queried the fortune teller as a smile appeared on her face. "You are not in an accepting mood tonight."

"Witch! trickster!" exclaimed the woman of Billion avenue. "Whence came you?"

"A natural question under the circumstances," said Zenobia. "I am not an American."

"We all know that."

"I come from the land of the Nile, that strange river where Cleopatra lived and loved. I have seen much of the world. I am the seventh child of a seventh child. I am the mysterious child of the Pharoahs. My mother brought me into the world beside the great Pyramid. I have been cradled in the arms of the Sphinx and I learned some of my magic from the all-wise Copts. Would you know more?"

"It is quite enough," said Eudora Wellington. "You have a history which I care not to read in its entirety. That accursed box—" and her gaze dropped to the floor where the little box lay with its lid half open.

"You remember?"

"I admit nothing," grated Eudora.

"Then let the world read what has been hidden these many years. Let the heart secrets be known of all men. Shall I begin with yourself, madame?"

"Ask me please," said Eudora defiantly.

"Do as you please, Madame Zenobia."

"It is a challenge, then?"

"Yes, if you say so."

Vestal, mystified by this conversation, saw Eudora Wellington move toward the door no longer intercepted by Zenobia. The seeress, for a wonder to the young girl, did not follow and at last Eudora passed from the house of magic.

Zenobia picked up the box and extended it toward Vestal. The girl took it and leaned forward for inspection.

"Why," she exclaimed, "there is nothing in the little box."

The seeress smiled.

"But Eudora Wellington started when she looked into it."

"Well might she do so. She saw the past there—her past."

"But I see nothing."

Zenobia took the box and placed it again on the table.

"Now, die cast now," continued the seeress. "The blood of the gold queen is boiling."

"And she will expose me to the police?"

"That she will, child."

"Then let me forestall her."

Vestal caught Zenobia's arm and was looking pleadingly into her face.

"May I not go?" she pleaded.

"Why not?" said Zenobia half aloud.

"You know what the papers have said about Paul's arrest? I may be permitted to see him. He is innocent like myself. There are dark hearts at the bottom of this mystery. I will no longer keep out of the pale of the law. Let them have me. Where Paul found the pearl no one knows but himself."

"Child," said Zenobia, "did you ever think that Paul would try to shield the guilty?"

"He would not."

"Where think you, then, that he found the gem since he utterly refuses to tell the truth."

Vestal Cummings shook her head perplexed and mystified.

"He may have found it in a place that might compromise you."

"Merciful Heaven! I did not think of that."

"Paul loves you and you would be the only person he would shield from the vengeance of the law. Believe me, he is keeping his secret for your sake."

Vestal did not speak. She had not thought of the matter in this personal light. That Paul might have found the missing pearl in her room had not entered the border land of her dreams.

"I'll go," she exclaimed. "I will face the minions of the law and stand and fall with Paul."

Half and hour later a carriage rattled over the streets of the city and a fair, though white face, was now and then pressed against the glass of the door.

The vehicle contained but one person and that was Vestal Cummings.

On, on went the vehicle, dodging in and out of the shadows and at last the girl was near her destination.

In a few moments she would startle the chief of police with the announcement that the girl who had baffled all of them stood before him.

All at once the carriage came to a halt.

One of the horses had thrown a shoe and was limping along for part of the shoe still clung to the hoof.

The driver got down and went forward.

Vestal opened the door and looked out.

"What is the matter?" she asked.

Just at that moment some one uttered a little cry and a man sprang forward.

"Just the one we're looking for!" he cried at sight of the white face in the vehicle.

Vestal Cummings drew back with a cry and would have shut the door, but the quicker hand of the man intercepted.

The driver turned and faced the stranger.

"Where were you going, cabby?" was the query he heard.

"I'm taking my fare to police headquarters."

"Well, you'll turn about. I'll get in and keep the young lady company."

"The — you will!" grated the driver. "I've got my orders and——"

"You'll take mine in preference," was the interruption. "You will drive to this number or there'll be a dead cabby for the morgue."

The man handed the driver a little card at which he glanced and mounted to the box.

Vestal, white-faced and speechless, had fallen back into the dark depths of the carriage and was wondering into whose hands she had fallen.

The horses turned and the next minute the vehicle was moving rapidly in another direction.

For some time silence fell between the girl and her captor and then it was broken by a question which Vestal could keep down no longer. "What does all this mean?" she exclaimed. "By what right have you to stop the carriage and order its driver about as though you owned the man?"

There came in response a light laugh before she heard a word and then she drew further back into the shadows, for the voice had a strangely familiar sound.

"You will find out ere long, miss," said the man who was in the dark of the opposite seat. "Have a little patience. The journey will not be very long. By Jove! we're here now."

The vehicle had suddenly lurch toward the sidewalk and the cold hand of her captor found Vestal's wrist.

"Have a little care," he said. "We are going to get out. Silence is discretion in this instance. By the way, one question before we get out. Why were you going to police headquarters?"

Vestal tried to catch the expression which she thought must be on the speaker's face, but she failed.

"Why would you know?" she said. "Does it concern you so much?"

"More than you think," was the response. "Then I am not to go to the police tonight?"

"You are not, miss."

"When then, pray?"

"Perhaps never. You may be as near police headquarters as you will ever get."

The clutch of the hand seemed to tighten on Vestal's wrist and she made a little effort to break its hold, but found out of the question.

"Come now. But hold! You haven't told me why you were going to the police."

"To tell the truth," answered Vestal.

"Ho! ho! The truth can wait awhile," and with this the man caught the pretty stenographer around the waist and lifted her from the carriage to dart toward a tall dark house, a glimpse of which the girl got ere they reached the door that opened without, as she could not see or hear, a summons of any kind.

The woman beloved by Paul Partland was in deeper peril than ever, and some new and darker mystery confronted her.

This dramatic story will be continued in next week's Ledger, presenting the readers with some very startling episodes and situations. Its perusal to the end will highly reward you. If you are not a subscriber to the Ledger, you are strongly advised to send in the price of subscription at once. If you do so, we will be glad to send you free any six patterns you may select from our pattern page, or one of our splendid Klug Cameras. Look at our advertisement on page fifteen.

On Stormy Michigan.

Jack (aboard steamer)—D-do you love me?

Eva—I—I don't know.

Jack—I have lost my heart during this stormy passage.

Eva—Gracious! Did that come up, too.

Why They Wear Kilts.

A. J. Drexel brings from his Scottish estate a story of a Highlander.

"There was a well-known American writer," he said at a dinner, "who automobiled through Scotland, and at a hotel in the Highlands was treated with the greatest incivility.

"Accordingly he complained to the manager.

"'And I complain in particular,' he said, 'about my waiter in the dining-room. The inattention and insolence of this man are insupportable.'

"The manager sought out the waiter, a rawboned, redhaired Highlander.

"'Dugald,' he said, 'the American visitor accuses you of inattention and insolence. What have you to say?'

"Dugald snorted and hotly replied:

"'It's no' to be expeckit that a self-respectin' Scot could wait on him wi' civeelity. Wasna he that said we took to the kilt because our feet were too large to get through trousers?'"

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Kind Lady—But, my poor man, if the crust on the last pie was so very hard why should you want another piece?

Sandy Pikes—Why, mum, I want to shave with it.

Down on the Farm.

The unsophisticated chap from the city had passed his first night in the old farmhouse.

"Well, neighbor," drawled the farmer at breakfast, "how did you sleep last night?"

"Sleep?" blurted the city chap in disgust. "Why, man, I was turning and turning all night."

The old farmer laughed uproariously.

"Kept turning, did you, neighbor? Wall, I told you that you would sleep like a top."

"Funny, eh? Well, do you know there was so much loose straw in the mattress it kept getting in my ears and nose all night?"

"Just so, stranger. When you asked about the bed didn't I say it would tickle you to death?"

And then the old farmer passed over the left-over pie and black coffee.

Too Proud.

"I'd be ashamed to go around begging," said the prosperous citizen.

"Takes all kinds uv people t' make a world," rejoined the hobo. "Here you is too proud t' beg, an' I'm too proud t' work."

Better Still.

"Can you recommend this phonograph?" queried the prospective purchaser.

"I can, but it isn't necessary," replied the dealer. "It speaks for itself."

JOKES AND

As Time Rolls On.

He (after a year's absence)—I suppose you and your husband are still living happily together?

She—Oh, no; we are now living happily apart.

Long String.

Stubb—Royal babies are born wealthy.

Penn—So? Has the Spanish heir much in his own name?

Stubb—Well, I should say so. Eighty-seven letters.

At the Summer Resort.

Mae—You say that your love for me is undying, George?

George—Yes, dearest.

Mae—Would you die for me if necessary?

George—Why—er—no. Didn't I just say that my love for you was of the undying kind?

Judge—What pretext did your husband have for beating you?

Woman—It wasn't a pretext, your honor; it was a club.

Very Exciting.

"So you went to see the new 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' at the opera house?" interrogated the cigar drummer.

"Yeas," replied the postmaster of Bacon Ridge, "and, by heck, it was up to date."

"Indeed. And did the ferocious dogs chase Liza over the ice?"

"Oh, no; that's old. In this show the ferocious officials of the ice trust chase her for using the ice without their permission."

Quite So.

Nimrod—Are you fond of hunting?

Gyer—It all depends.

Nimrod—Depends on what?

Gyer—Whether I am hunting game or a collar button.

Willing to Compromise.

"Please, ma'am," said the unlaundered hobo at the kitchen door, "have youse a pie in de house dat youse wouldn't mind givin' t' a poor blind man?"

"But," protested the lady of the house, "you are only blind in one eye."

"Well," rejoined the hobo, "ef youse is so pertickler, don't gimme but half a pie."

No Chance.

"Do you consider marriage a lottery?" asked the coy young widow.

"Not so you could notice it without a pair of green spectacles," replied the fussy old bachelor. "It's more on the order of a shell game."

There Were Others.

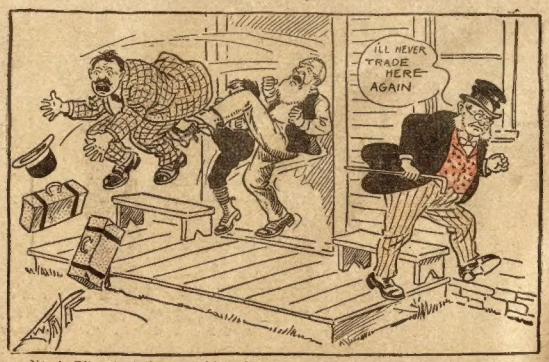
Ferdinand Fourflush—Great snakes! And I was just telling that young lady she was the only star in the firmament for me.

THE FUNNY SALESMAN.

No. 1—Darius Drumsticker—Er—here's where I tell one of my funny stories and sell some goods.

No. 2.—Yessir—that's just how it happened. And I said to the chap with the gimlet eyes, "You bore me greatly, sir." Just then——

No. 3—The Audience—He, he! Ho, ho! Haw, haw! Oh—Whee—Whee—Wow—Wow! Stop him! Shut up, will you? Aw——



No. 4—Git out of this, you blamed nuisance! You've cost us a whole week's profit by the things we smashed laffin'! an' we won't buy a thing from you, either!

J°LLITY

Butterfly—How is it that you flies always roost on that engine wheel?

Willie Fly—Why, it's a fly-wheel, isn't it?

Butterfly—So it is, but aren't you afraid that it'll explode?

Willie Fly—Why?

Butterfly—Because it's a revolver.

A Boy and His Teacher.

A teacher was putting questions in mental arithmetic to a class of boys.

"Now, my little man, you there," he said, indicating the smallest of the lads, "if I were to shoot at a tree having five birds on it, and kill three, how many would be left?"

"Three, sir!"

"No, no, my boy, there would be two left."

"Please, sir, you said you shot three; they would be left—the other two would be flied away!"

Mrs. Oldun—There was a time, Thomas, when you used to chuck me under the chin sometimes. But you don't do it now.

Mr. Oldun—Yes, my love, but you didn't have so many chins then.

Lead in Prayer.

Little Sarah came home from the Junior Christian Endeavor meeting, which she had been leading, in an excited frame of mind. "It would have been such a nice meeting," she told mamma, "if Ruth Gray hadn't just whispered and laughed all the time. But I stopped her," she declared, triumphantly. "Why, mamma, I was so mad at her that I asked her to lead in prayer."

Modern Improvements.

Fire Insurance Agent—I fear I must charge you extra rates. You burn kerosene oil here, I see.

Mr. Suburb—Yes, but we run no extra risk—no risk at all. The kitchen is separate from the house, and there is a skylight in the roof big enough for the servant girl and the cook stove to sail through without hurting anything.

NOT HIS FAULT.

Parent—You are audacious! You are heartless! She is my only child.

Suitor (wishing to pacify)—But, my dear sir, you—er—can't blame me for that.

Well Filled.

As the celebrated leading lady stepped from the train at Sioux Falls she hastened to the baggage room.

"Where is my suitcase?" she queried anxiously. "Ah, there it is. Be careful, porter."

"Suitcase, ma'am?" replied the astonished porter. "Why, that piece of baggage looks big enough to be a treasure chest."

The leading lady laughed and poked her $1,000 bull dog in the ribs with her green parasol.

"Oh, that's my suitcase all right," she confided. "It contains all my divorce suits to date."

Economical.

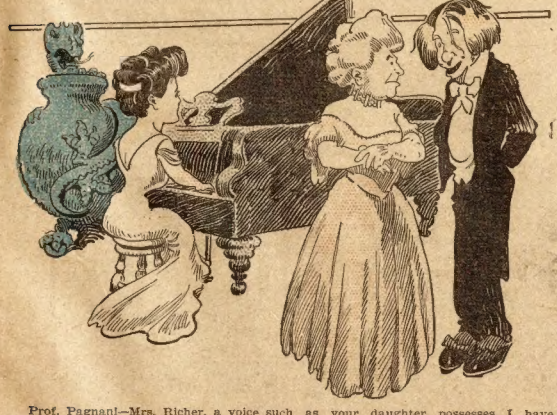
Mrs. Hardapple—So our city niece Hattie is back from across the ocean?

Mr. Hardapple—Yes, Maria, and she writes that she took in all the famous galleries in Yurrup.

Mrs. Hardapple (in astonishment)—Galleries? Lands sakes! Couldn't the poor gal afford a seat downstairs?

Mamma—Don't you know the bible says we should love our neighbors?

Lillie—I know, ma, but this is an awful neighborhood.



Prof. Pagnani—Mrs. Richer, a voice such as your daughter possesses I have seldom dreamt of.

Mrs. Richer—Oh, is it true, professor?

Prof. Pagnani—Yes; unless I ate something very heavy.

With Few Exceptions.

Wilton Lackaye says that while on a downtown L train one morning recently he chanced to overhear portions of an interesting conversation between two young women occupying adjoining seats.

"I see by the paper," observed one of the young women, "that Mr. Blank, the octogenarian, is dead. What on earth is an octogenarian, anyhow?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," was the reply, "but there's one thing certain—they're a sickly lot of people. You never hear of one unless he is dying."

The Literal Truth.

"I thought you told me you were playing the heavy part in this spectacular drama?"

"So I am."

"Why, you don't even appear on the stage."

"Oh, yes, I do. I'm the hind legs of the elephant."

Had No Kick Coming.

"I hate work," said Languid Lewis.

"I don't see why," rejoined Humble Harry. "It's a safe bet dat work never done youse no harm."

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THE SECRET MARRIAGE;

Or THE FATE OF A BIGAMIST.

By CONSTANCE BEATRICE WILLARD, author of "Magnolia Blossoms," "Red Roses and Red Love," "A Traitor to Love," etc.

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CHAPTER XVI.

LOVE BREAKS DOWN ALL BARRIERS.

Two ladies with flushed faces sat in the little public library room, talking in low tone, interrupting each other, and once kissing, this last when Helen said earnestly:

"I have suffered so much, but no matter what has happened, nor how he comes back to me, I will welcome him with such love he will never leave me again."

"And you forgive George Goodrich, too?" Helen blushed brightly, disclosing a secret Mrs. Morgan suspected, but she only replied:

"Of course, he thought he was acting for the best, and when people believe a thing is all right I can't see why I have any right to sit in judgment."

"You're a better woman than I, Helen," Mrs. Morgan said softly.

"Nonsense, Grace, dear."

"Listen, Helen, you have given me your confidence, and I will tell you what is breaking my heart. When I was a girl I loved a man, I never knew how much until now. I hinted about it before."

"Then you are the woman, Grace?"

"I am that very unhappy woman, and I lie awake at night and think of him, and wonder what has become of him. He said I could raise him, and I know I can, for there are not many men who love as he," and Mrs. Morgan began to cry so violently that Helen was obliged to wait upon the several patrons who inconveniently came in just then.

"Stop crying, dear," she said, rejoining Grace, who was hidden by her high desk, "it won't help matters. Send for the man."

Mrs. Morgan looked up reproachfully.

"Do you suppose I wouldn't have done it long ago if I had had his address?" she asked.

"You might send to his place of business and ask for it."

"It isn't his place of business any more, for I read in the papers that he had disposed of all his property."

"They would probably have it."

"I couldn't do that, Helen," Grace said, shivering.

"Well, I can, or better still, I'll have George do it and there certainly could be no objection about that."

"You will?"

"Why, of course; I'll ask him tonight."

The librarian looked up pleadingly.

"Helen, come with me and ask George today."

"But I never go to the hotel," Helen objected.

"Why, not now? You know you were married. Come, and help me. Remember how I have suffered. Perhaps he might telegraph."

"He could do that, and get an answer immediately, especially if he used the long distance 'phone."

"You darling," Mrs. Morgan cried, kissing her friend ecstatically, and without waiting for closing time, the two put on their wraps and started for the hotel.

"Now, promise, as soon as you get that address you'll write," Helen demanded as they scurried along.

"Bless you, I won't write, I'll telegraph or use the long distance 'phone, if I can catch him, and then there will be very little more time lost. We have lost enough as it is."

"Not a year," laughed Helen.

"My dear, we have lost nearly nineteen," was the rather pitiful reply, which made Helen say softly:

"You dear!"

"I'm going to telegraph: 'Come, I want you to marry me. Grace.'"

This brought a laugh from Helen, who asked:

"And if you get him on the long distance?"

"I scarcely believe I could stand that, especially if he is a long way off," and with these words the two mounted the steps of the hotel.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE STRANGENESS OF IT ALL.

George was not surprised when a very handsome young man, with a certain courtliness of manner missing in Northern men, laid his card upon the counter and said quietly:

"I have called relative to your advertisement about Calhoun Fairley, if you are 'G. G.'"

Looking at the card, George read: "Kenneth Rolf."

"I am he, Mr. Rolf," George said in a business-like tone, summoning a subordinate and leading the way into his private office.

Kenneth looked about him, waiting for George to speak first, and he did, asking as they seated themselves:

"And now, Mr. Rolf, what connection is there between you and Mr. Fairley, and what do you know about him?"

"I am his life-long friend and neighbor, but I came to know what you know about him."

The two men looked at each other in dismay, and then, warming to the subject, they told each other the pitiful tragedy.

"Then you probably saw him last?" Ken said gravely.

"Perhaps I am not the last one to have seen him, but as far as we can see, the last one who knew him," George returned.

"And you say he was married to this lady legally and in due order?"

"Certainly."

"Then, why, man, didn't he speak out when we were in such terrible trouble? The simple words, 'I am already married,' would have saved so much agony," and for the moment Ken felt he could never forgive such selfishness.

George knew more of the world, and had gauged the missing man better than any of them, and he smiled grimly as he said:

"Simply because he's selfish and cares little for the comfort of any one else. Look at the way he has treated Mrs. Fairley."

Kenneth started. It had been many a long year since that name had rung in his ears.

"He leaves her here with a scandal whirling about her head; does not either telegraph or write until that article comes out in the New York papers, and then comes back after those telegrams are sent."

Looking back over their lives together, Kenneth could not help but admit that such had been Cal's way of acting. It has always been his plans that were carried out, although he, Ken, was the elder. Many times he had suffered through the intense selfishness and heedlessness of his friend, but never as during the past six months.

"I feel that I must be presented to Mrs. Fairley," he said slowly, "and take her back with me."

"She would scarcely want to go," George said a little hotly.

"And why not? It is her home. The sweetest girl in the world, Pansy Ainsworth, will receive her as an extremely welcome guest, and she and I will do our best to make Calhoun's wife, or widow, as the case may be, just as happy as possible. In fact, I feel so grateful to her for existing I could not do enough for her," and he smiled.

"She will always have a home with my mother and me," he said stiffly.

"Thanks, very, very much, but Calhoun is a very rich man, and for the dignity of herself she must not remain here." Ken replied just as quickly, and possibly warmer words might have followed had not they been interrupted by the telegraph operator, who poking in his head, said excitedly:

"Mr. Goodrich, here's Mr. Fairley and another gent."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE LOVE OF A FRIEND.

During that season at Monte Carlo a couple attracted a great deal of attention, and many surmises were made regarding them. They were to be seen always together, but never at the tables, although they often watched the players—the younger man with a strange, wondering expression on his face, the elder with all his ideas hidden behind a mask which never dropped.

The tenderness of this elder man towards the other, who was plainly mentally unbalanced, seemed wonderful, yet if any one could have peered behind that mask, he might have read in the heart of Robert Erskine the greatest happiness he had known since the time, when at the command of one girl, he married another and blasted his life. His great hope had been for children. With him fatherhood was something holy, and the fact that he had no sons to come after him a dire misfortune. His loss of Grace Morgan had been something terrible, and he wondered if there were some who are selected by unkind fate to be the scapegoats of many.

Then chance threw Calhoun Fairley across his path, in that young man's dire need, and his heart opened to him and he took the strangely married man and tended him as though he were his brother in flesh and blood.

There was one night when the celebrated physicians and Robert hung over the wasted form, waiting for the crisis.

"Helen, I do love you," came in broken words from the parched lips. "Roses have thorns, and one from you has pierced my heart," the listeners heard. Then words so incoherent followed that they ceased to try to make them out. There appeared to be something about a marriage that was not one. Some strange jargon in which white roses and a pansy seemed to play an important part, but gradually even these stopped, the thin body lay still, and the physicians waited, for the fever was still high. At last the sick man murmured another word, then stirred slightly, immediately falling asleep.

"The crisis is passed," the physicians informed Robert Erskine, and out of curiosity he asked what was the word which soothed him.

"Love," answered one of the gray-haired doctors. The other asked:

"Do you know what caused this breakdown?"

"His wife eloped," Robert said sullenly.

Both doctors shook their heads, then the elder said gravely:

"We feel that we ought to tell you that while he no doubt will recover physically, we must warn you that his mental condition may not be normal."

Robert paid but little attention to these words then, but as Calhoun came slowly back to life, his friend found that he was as ignorant of everything as a new-born baby, that his life had to be begun over again. The physicians prescribed a sea voyage, and Robert, who felt as though the son he had so longed for had been given him, took him to various resorts throughout England and the Continent, until they reached Monaco, and here he appeared to be happiest, and so they remained, mingling with the people, yet strangely apart from them.

Within the six months or so they had been traveling, Robert found the intellect of Calhoun developing rapidly. He was sorry for his own well-preserved looks, for he would have liked to have passed for the father of his charge; as it was he called him his brother. From knowing nothing, he had progressed until at the end of the season he talked and appeared like a boy of fourteen or fifteen, with no knowledge, however, save that gained from Robert's conversation. Still he seemed to realize a difference. As they seated themselves in a compartment, Robert had paid to have marked reserved, he suddenly asked:

"Robert, was I ever sick?" looking at a crippled figure drawn past in an invalid chair.

Robert trembled as he said carelessly:

"Oh, yes, we all are."

"Have I forgotten anything?" The words came in a strained voice.

As Robert looked at the handsome young man, attractive even with his lost memory, he began to hope that some measure of happiness might come to him, but if any change was coming, he knew he must move slowly.

"Forgotten? I expect so. I know I have forgotten more than I know. Why?"

"I don't know, I just felt so for a minute," he returned, and then Robert hastened to divert his mind, and nothing was said on the subject until as they were stopping in Paris, he turned his handsome face and pitiful, groping eyes toward his friend and asked in a stilled voice:

"Do I know anything about roses?"

"Bless the boy, of course you do," Robert returned quickly. "We all love them." Very well did he remember that night when he rambled on about roses.

"I think I want some, Rob," he said gently.

"That's what I want, too," he returned, remembering the advice of the great specialist under whose charge Calhoun was now.

"Watch him very carefully," the doctor had said. "If he asks for anything that could be connected with his past life, get it for him as quickly as possible, but do so in a matter-of-fact way."

The two were therefore driven to an immense flower stall and Robert, carefully watching his charge, ordered roses in profusion. The owner of the stall hurried so to fill the order that the petals fell like rain, and two dozen white roses fell on the floor of the carriage. Calhoun looked down at them, his eyes trying to pierce into their secret. As though he were looking upon moving pictures, he seemed to see in that pile of white rose leaves a sinister something. It was large and heavy, and suddenly disappeared in the pile of rose leaves, and the head of a woman took its place. Her face was turned from him, but he knew that she had taken some part in his life. In his fright, his brain stirred as never before; he raised his eyes for support to Robert, but they fell upon a bunch of glowing, deep red ones, and with a shriek he grasped them, the thorns tearing his hands, crying:

"Helen, Helen, my God! I remember, I remember," and as he took him back to the hotel, Robert Erskine wondered whether this man whom he loved so dearly was to awaken to his former self, or whether his intellect was to be forever darkened.

CHAPTER XIX.

A CHAPTER OF EXPLANATIONS.

"Where is my wife? Take me to her at once," came in excited tones from the doorway, and George and Kenneth, hurrying forward, saw Cal's face, thin, but wonderfully refined, almost guarded by a tall, gray-eyed man, who said quietly:

"Easy, my lad, easy."

"Oh, Ken!" cried the excited man, as the two grasped hands. "Where is my wife?"

"Do you mean Pansy?"

"Pansy? No! What is she to me? I want Helen, my wife. Where is she?" fiercely to George. Again the stranger interposed.

"What have I told you right along, my boy? And you promised to act so quietly, and see how it is. Now sit right here," pulling forward a lounging chair and gently thrusting Calhoun into it, "and I'll ask questions for you. First, is Mrs. Fairley here?"

"Yes; that is, in this vicinity," George replied.

Calhoun started up, but the firm hand of his friend held him back.

"Is she well?"

"Reasonably so, and especially when she has suffered as she has." George could not resist that dig.

"Kindly reserve any reproaches until Mr. Fairley is in a condition to receive them. He has been very ill, so ill that I never expected he would recover."

MRS. C. E. FINK

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In this nineteenth century to keep up with the march of progress every power of woman is strained to its utmost, and the tax upon her physical system is far greater than ever.

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Women suffering from any form of female weakness are invited to write Mrs. Pinkham, at Lynn, Mass. Out of her vast volume of experience she probably has the very knowledge that will help your case.

"I beg pardon," George muttered. How he hated this man, who, he believed, had injured his dear love!

"Now, lad, sit right there, and we'll get this all thrashed out. You must wait a little before you see Mrs. Fairley. Just be happy that she is right at hand; that we do not have to lock her up," and he laid a caressing hand upon Calhoun's shoulder, and began to tell of his visit to the house where he had expected to meet his wife, her cruel letter and his long illness, which left him without any memory, and finally of his recollections of the past being evoked by the roses. Calhoun's face was covered by his hands as his friend spoke for him.

"And now you know our story, can you tell us anything to lighten the gloom and explain the mystery?" Robert Erskine asked.

George handed him a chair, and said frankly:

"I'm awfully glad to hear this, for Mrs. Fairley has gone through the very valley of the shadow. First can you explain about the midnight marriage?"

Calhoun raised his head, but Kenneth stepped forward.

"Mr. Fairley's father had conceived the notion of marrying his son to his ward. That young lady did me the honor of returning my love, and we were only waiting until his return South to have him help us break it to the major. We felt sure that Cal did not love her, and would be glad to be free of the invisible chain. In the meanwhile the major wrote his son a beautiful letter, telling him of his wishes, but declared that unless he and Miss Ainsworth loved each other they were not to regard his wishes in the least. He dwelt very strongly on this. He also asked his son to see Miss Ainsworth and ascertain her feelings for him, and if either or both preferred to let the marriage question drop he was to be told."

"Why, I never read that letter," Calhoun said, raising his head.

"I know it. It was found in your trunk, which we took the liberty of opening and searching when we were in despair about you."

"I didn't telegraph, did I?" Calhoun said slowly, then suddenly he held out both hands, saying brokenly:

"Oh, you poor fellow, and dear little Mrs. Fairley, say that rotten marriage has not held!"

"Cal, why was it you didn't tell the truth so as to save us what we have gone through?" and for the moment Kenneth felt very bitter, even with the pale, haggard man before him.

"I honestly never thought of solving the mystery that way. You see I was hardly possessed of even then. In addition, I wanted to get Helen before she heard anything about it."

"You didn't," George said sharply. "It was all displayed in the New York papers."

"My God!" the unfortunate husband cried, springing to his feet. The same quiet hand was laid upon his arm and Erskine's voice soothed his racked nerves.

"Wait, my boy. Gentlemen, I am forced to remind you of the fact that Mr. Fairley is in a weak condition even yet, and he must not be unduly excited. Try to temper your natural indignation with a little consideration until he is well enough to stand alone. Now, as I understand matters, a marriage ceremony was performed over Mr. Fairley and a Miss Ainsworth at the deathbed of Major Fairley. Owing to very peculiar circumstances, neither heard the questions of the clergyman, and so made no objections. However, owing to the fact that Mr. Fairley was already married, the ceremony does not hold good, and as he was not a party to the deception, he will not be held guilty of bigamy. Unfortunately, however, the facts leak out, and seized by an enterprising reporter are written up and published in the New York papers. Mrs. Fairley, seeing this writeup, naturally is wounded to the very heart, and perhaps without consulting any one capable of properly advising her, leaves orders that no communications from her husband are to be delivered to her, sends a note to an agreed upon address for him. This coming on top of the excitement and fatigue he has been enduring for several months, is too much, and he again gives way. Unfortunate to be at his side when he collapses, and the rest is as I have told you." The quiet voice ceased.

In a few words, half guessing some, Robert Erskine set forth the mystery, cleared of its cobwebs and freed it of its entangling threads.

"I was the one to whom Mrs. Fairley came for help," George said in a low tone, "but you see I was at a disadvantage. She did not confide fully in me, for she said nothing of her marriage, and so I was forced to believe that she had been wronged in the worst possible fashion. That was why I was so fierce with you when you came here," to Calhoun.

The steady hand rested a little heavily upon Cal's shoulder, and he only said in a low, intense tone:

"And you dared to think that I could do such a thing, or that such an ideal woman would permit the slightest indignity?" and the invalid's eyes blazed.

"It was the secret marriage, lad. There you were to blame. The beginning of the trouble lay in that," Robert Erskine said in a low tone.

"Where was Mrs. Fairley when I came here?" Cal continued.

"With my mother," George returned quietly, and then they all realized the noble nature of the hotel clerk. Believing her guilty, in his great love he had taken her into his own home and cared for her during the weary months she had pined for her husband.

"Is she there now?" Cal asked almost inaudibly.

"Yes."

"Mr. Fairley is placed under the deepest obligations, Mr. Goodrich," Robert broke in, "and he will express them as soon as he is able, but now, I think the best thing will be to put him to bed, let him sleep off some of his fatigue, while you and Mr. Rolf break the news to his wife."

Cal suddenly rose to his feet. "No, Rob, I must see her first. To know that she, my poor wronged wife, is so near and not know that I am there to her and love her more than life itself, is more than I can endure."

"Very well, sit down, old boy, and we'll send for her, eh, Mr. Goodrich?"

"Yes, I think we had better," George said, although the words hurt him.

"I can only hope that Mrs. Fairley will like me a little, lad, for it goes hard to give you up," Erskine said, bending over Cal.

The young man only pressed the hand of his friend, and closed his eyes, then suddenly opened them and sprang to his feet, for he heard in the rich, clear tones he loved so much:

"We must see Mr. Goodrich for a moment. Oh, George, forgive me for disturbing you, but I want a favor, and—" then the room began to turn round with Helen. Cal took a step forward, but she was too quick for him, and was at his side, her arms about him, her loving eyes reading the whole story in his appearance.

"My darling, don't stand," the others heard her say, as she pushed him back in the chair, and then they left these two, so happily united.

With his eyes moist with emotion, although perfectly content to leave his ward in those hands, Robert Erskine left the room in a maze, from which he was awakened by hearing his name uttered in a very familiar voice, and turning he saw Grace, not the Grace he had struggled to earn, but brave Grace, upon whom without a word he folded to his heart.

CHAPTER XX.

THE THREE-FOLD HONEYMOON.

The old Fairley homestead is a lovely place with its many acres, its flowers, trees and inland lake, upon which, in the moonlight, boats can be seen, holding married lovers, enjoying a protracted honeymoon.

While the first anniversary of the Fairley wedding day has passed, leaving upon being still bride and groom, and Helen looks as sweet and happy as does little Pansy, who feels that the very gates of an earthly Heaven have opened to her and Ken. Robert and Grace Erskine are content in their love, and as yet Robert has not missed Calhoun, for Grace is a gift he never hoped for, even when he was trying his hardest. It is early summer, and all dressed in white they gather on the lawn, with Aunt Salome in the background, she having spoken blessings upon their heads. Laughter floats up to her and she can see the happy expressions on the faces of all. Suddenly Pansy asks her a question and she comes a little further out on the broad veranda.

"Why, Aunt Salome, so many of the roses seem to be colored. How is it?"

The worn face of the woman who had once loved the major comes back to her.

"The time of the white rose has gone, honey. Life and happiness have come to this place; white roses mean sorrow and death. I had them changed last fall. Keep some, but not enough to disturb what has come to the old home," and remembering that strange funeral and Calhoun's strange words, she says no more, even to her. Although nothing is said, Calhoun twines in his wife's dark locks one of the rich red roses that mean so much to them, and Ken smiles at Pansy as he holds up to her view a dozen fine pansies, and Robert Erskine picks out some delicate purple clematis and whispers to his wife:

"The one love of my life, my saving Grace."

Therefore, surrounded by all that is beautiful in nature, loving and being loved, and bound united by ties of friendship nothing can sever, this sextette may be safely left, with Aunt Salome looking on from the background.

(The end.)

THE OLD LOVE'S REVENGE.

BY HELEN CORWIN PIERCE.

"So, Miss Teft has refused you? I expected it," said Miss Lorn, with an odd glance at her tall, handsome brother, as he stood looking gloomily from the window.

Philip Lorn frowned.

"I did not. I could have sworn she loved me. I believe even yet that she does, or did. There is something about it that I don't understand."

"I can solve the mystery. She is going to marry Felix Styne."

"How do you know?"

"His grandfather told me. The old man doesn't like the match, either."

"That puppy?" exclaimed Philip.

"He may be a puppy, but he is a better match than you—or she thinks so."

"She has more money than I have, or will have, I suppose."

"That is more than doubtful."

"What do you mean by more than doubtful? He and Lucy are the only ones old Mr. Styne has to leave his money to."

"Lucy is his favorite. I believe if she were to marry to suit him he would give her all of it."

"If I thought that," Philips Lorn said angrily, to himself, "I would marry her myself tomorrow—if I could get her just to be with Ida Teft."

It was true Miss Teft, beauty and belle, had deliberately and decidedly encouraged Philip Lorn's suit till she discovered that Felix Styne was likely to have the most money.

She really loved Philip, as much as so selfish a creature could love anything, except money, but she refused him and engaged herself to Felix.

She did not know that Felix's rich grandfather, on whom depended all his chance for riches, did not like him, and never did.

Lucy Styne and Felix were not brother and sister, but cousins, Lucy being the only child of a favorite son, and Felix the offspring or another, who had disappointed and disgraced his father as long as he lived with his dissipations, and in whose footsteps Felix seemed but too inclined to follow.

Lucy Styne was one of the sweetest of girls—a shy little wild flower, as unlike Miss Teft as a wood-violet is unlike a hothouse queen.

She was devoted to her grandfather, who was an invalid, and whose side she seldom left.

Philip Lorn came sometimes to see the old gentleman, and was a great favorite with him. Nothing could have pleased him better than to see the handsome, elegant, and agreeable young man the husband of his favorite grandchild.

Lucy, a romantic little maiden, had long since enshrined handsome Phil in her innocent heart. Hence, when he came smarting from his rejection by the woman he loved, to woo this little wild rose, the wooing sped uncommonly.

In three days after his rejection by Ida Teft he was engaged to Lucy Styne.

Geoffrey Styne, the grandfather, knowing that he held his life on a very brittle tenure, and anxious to see his darling's happiness secured, urged forward the wedding arrangements, and the marriage took place in less than a month after Phillip's hasty proposal.

Miss Teft, full of secret rage that the man she loved still should so soon have consoled himself of her loss, attended the wedding, looking more magnificently beautiful and queenly than ever. She was very sweet and condescending to the girlish bride, and congratulated Philip elaborately. No matter how her former lover felt, he bore himself like a happy man, and Lucy seemed in a heaven of gentle rapture and delight.

Geoffrey Styne lived only five weeks after the marriage, and when his will was opened it was found that, with the exception of two thousand dollars to Felix, he had left everything he possessed to his granddaughter, Lucy.

Miss Teft, on learning of her fiance's virtual disinheritance, lost no time in breaking her engagement with him, and married the next eligible on her list, a somewhat aged widower, with whom she went to a distant city to live.

It thus happened that she and Philip did not meet for three years, when Mrs. Dalton, a widow, and still beautiful, returned to her own home.

Philip Lorn, to his own amazement, heard that she had come back without one single additional heart-throb, and, meeting her in the street soon after, was passing her without recognition, when she spoke to him.

Tears of chagrin almost shone in her splendid eyes as she did so.

"How I must have changed for you to forget me so," she said reproachfully. "You have changed some."

Mrs. Dalton bit her lip.

"Have I grown awfully old and homely?" she asked. "Come now, Mr. Lorn, tell me the truth."

"You certainly do look older," he answered. "It would be very rude in me to say you had grown homely," he added, awkwardly.

"How is your wife?" Mrs. Dalton asked abruptly. "I suppose she grows younger and handsomer every year."

"Well, I think so," Philip answered, a proud and happy light coming into his eyes, and, all unconsciously, his voice taking a tender tone.

Mrs. Dalton smiled and bowed, and passed on; but the smile was a forced one.

Philip Lorn might have been her husband now if she had listened to the dictates of her heart, and they would have had enough to live on well. He was a rising lawyer, and oh, how handsome he was, and how tenderly he spoke of his wife! One could almost imagine he loved her.

A sudden desire rose in her to see Lucy in her home.

Mrs. Lorn received her with graceful cordiality. She had been living too secluded a life at the time of Philip's affair with Miss Teft to have ever heard of it.

Mrs. Dalton was compelled to acknowledge to herself that Lucy had certainly grown lovelier.

There was a child, too—a darling little bright-eyed fellow, the image of his handsome father. Mrs. Dalton turned sick with envy when she saw him.

"How happy you must be," she said to Lucy, scarcely able to conceal the bitterness she felt.

"I am very happy," Lucy answered, with simple earnestness. "I thank God every morning, and night, and all the time, for my husband and my child."

"You had better thank me for your husband!" said Mrs. Dalton irreverently.

Lucy's lovely eyes widened. She thought she had certainly misunderstood.

"You would never have got him if it had not been for me," the widow continued, her jealous envy and irritation completely getting the better of her. "Of course, he has told you how near he came to marrying me?"

A sharp pang smote Lucy's tender little heart.

"I don't think he has mentioned it," she said slowly.

"Well, he did," Mrs. Dalton continued, with a forced laugh. "He came near enough to ask me, anyway."

"And you refused him?" exclaimed Lucy, unable to conceive of anything so incredible as the rejection of her idol by any woman living.

"I did. Was I not hard-hearted? He was very much in earnest, too—would hardly take no for an answer. Indeed, I had left him on shamefully. I felt quite conscience-smitten; till I heard two or three days after of his engagement to you."

"Who told you?" Lucy asked, feeling more like hating this dreadful woman than her gentle heart ever had felt like hating anything before.

"Oh, your cousin Felix. I was engaged to him then."

"Yes; and broke your engagement because grandpa did not leave him so much money as you expected," said Lucy spiritedly.

"Precisely, my dear. I could not afford to marry a poor man, or I should have taken Philip Lorn; I always liked him. Indeed, I liked him so much that, if he had not been a married man when I broke off with Felix, I am not sure but I might have reconsidered my decision."

Lucy bit her lip and looked down. She could not trust herself to speak.

"I always suspected," Mrs. Dalton went on, bitterly resolute to empty her quiver, "that there was some sort of a bargain between your grandfather and Mr. Lorn; that was the reason for Felix being left out in the cold."

"For shame, Mrs. Dalton, what bargain could there have been?"

"Well, you know," said the widow, emiting impatiently as she rose to go, "that your grandfather was very fond of Mr. Lorn, and I am sure no one could for a moment imagine that he married for love on such very short notice. But, really, I must go," she added, as Lucy stared speechlessly at her, unable to comprehend such effrontery and insolence. "Your husband will be home soon, too. Give him my love."

With that, Mrs. Dalton departed, and Lucy, catching her baby in her arms, burst into such a passion of hysterical weeping as had never stirred her tender soul before.

"There," said the widow, clenching her white teeth viciously as she went out. "I guess I have paid him for not knowing me, and telling me I looked old."

By the time Philip came home Lucy had dried her tears, but her eyes still showed traces of them.

"You have been grieving, darling," her husband said, as he kissed her tenderly. "Has anything happened?"

Poor Lucy! The kiss and the tender words would have brought the tears back, if the remembrance of what Mrs. Dalton had said had not made her too angry for that. For the first time in their married life gentle Lucy was really angry with her husband.

"Philip," she asked, drawing away from him, "did you love me when you married me?"

Her husband looked annoyed.

"Isn't it rather a late day for you to begin to question my love for you?" he asked severely.

"Did Ida Teft refuse you three days before you asked me to be your wife?"

Philip reddened. He had always been ashamed of that episode.

"Why do you ask?" he questioned.

"Mrs. Dalton has been here this afternoon," she said so.

Philip muttered something very uncomplimentary to the widow.

"Well, it is true," he admitted reluctantly.

"If you did not marry me for love," his wife asked, in a cold and trembling voice, "why did you marry me?"

Philip arose angrily from his chair. He was ashamed to tell the truth, and therefore angry at being questioned.

"Perhaps you had better ask Mrs. Dalton," he said sarcastically.

"Mrs. Dalton told what she thought without being asked."

"Indeed?" and again Mr. Lorn muttered something wicked about the woman he had imagined himself so madly in love with once.

Lucy rose proudly and stood before him. He had never seen such a look on her lovely face before.

"Philip, did money enter in any way into your reasons for asking me to be your wife?"

"How can you ask such a question?"

"It is a very simple question. The only difficulty seems to be in answering it."

"If you will sit down and be reasonable, I will answer you."

Lucy sat down.

"There," she said, "but don't say anything about being reasonable, if that woman told the truth."

"How angry you are, Lucy! I never saw you really angry before."

"I never had any such occasion before."

"You have none really now."

"Why don't you answer what I asked you, then?"

"See here, Lucy, I am going to tell you the truth. I asked you to marry me because I wanted to punish Miss Teft for leading me on to propose to her, and then coolly refusing me. I did hope your grandfather would leave his money away from Felix, because she was engaged to him. My motives were utterly contemptible. You can't despise me for them more than I despise myself. But one thing, Lucy; I began to love you almost immediately after our marriage, and to wonder that I had ever imagined myself in love with such a mass of selfishness and vanity as Ida Teft."

Lucy sat holding her little boy, her face bent low over his curly head. The tears were falling fast.

The child watched his father half in affright.

"Don't papa; you make mamma cry," he said, in his childish way.

Philip knelt suddenly, clasping both mother and child.

"Ask mamma to forgive papa, Phil," he said to the little one; "papa has been a very, naughty boy."

She child lifted his rosy face to his mother. Before he could speak Lucy's arms were round her husband's neck, and he knew he was forgiven.

But I hope we have seen the last of that hateful Mrs. Dalton, she said, after a while.

"She had better never darken these doors again," supplemented Philip.

And she never did.

Dangerous Experiment.

Sandy Pikes—Why, pard, you look all done up!

Gritty George—Yes, I saw an item in de paper dat if yer made faces at a bulldog he would take to his heels. I made de faces per directions.

Sandy Pikes—And did he take to his heels?

Gritty George—No, he took to my heels.

UNCLE SAM'S MESSENGER;

Or, THE BOY WHO FOUND GARCIA. By S. A. D. COX.

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CHAPTER I.
A COLLISION.

Patter—patter—patter!——thud!

"Oh-h—ow! Ouch!"

"Phew!"

A handsome, manly-looking boy of perhaps seventeen years, dressed in the uniform of a messenger boy, had turned a corner off Pennsylvania avenue in the city of Washington and had collided with a big, hulking youth of nineteen or twenty years, and both had sat down rather suddenly, the messenger boy's cap and the other youth's hat flying off and rolling into the gutter.

It was then that the exclamations given above were uttered.

The youths sat there and rubbed their foreheads and glared at each other. On the face of the bigger youth was a look of rage, but there was a whimsical half-smile on the messenger boy's face.

"I've a good mind ter lick ther stuffin' outer ye!" hissed the big youth, as he scrambled to his feet.

The other leaped lightly to his feet and said promptly:

"All right; go ahead."

"Whut'd ye run inter me fur?"

"Didn't mean to do it, Johnny. I didn't see you, you know."

"Well, yer orter look whur ye're goin'. An' me name hain't Johnny, neether."

"Oh, isn't it, Sammy?"

"Thet hain't me name, I tell ye!" belligerently

"Oh, isn't it, Charlie?"

"Say, wot's der matter wid ye?" snarled the big youth, doubling up his fists. "Don' ye call me outer me name ag'in, see!"

"All right, Tommy."

"Heer! wot did I tell ye?" almost yells the other, taking a step forward. "Ef ye do thet erg'in I'll smash ye, thet's wot I'll do, ye bet!"

"Proceed with the smashing, Billy," said the other, coolly.

"It's lucky ye called me by me name. I kin tell ye!" growled the other. "If ye'd called me outer me name ag'in I'd hev giv et to ye. I kin tell ye!"

"So that's your name, is it, Archibald?"

The other glared, his face red with rage. His fists were clenched and he took another step forward, but there was something in the cool face of the other, in the calm gaze of the keen, blue-gray eyes that held him in check.

A few moments he hesitated, and then he growled:

"I know ye, Ben Bolton, an' I'll giv' ye er lickin' one uv of these days, ye jest see ef I don't!"

"Do it now," said the other. "I don't believe in putting off, you know. Go ahead and do it now, Chester."

The other's face grew redder than ever, and he seemed about on the point of bursting with wrath.

"Say, ye mus' jest be sp'ilin' fur er lickin'!" he snarled.

"Not at all, Frederick," was the cool reply. "But if you intend to ever give me a licking, go right at the work and do it now. I'll do my best to make it interesting for you, Charlie Ross."

This was too much for the other, and with a smothered howl of rage he leaped forward and began striking out at the messenger boy with all his might and as rapidly as he could work his arms.

Nor was the messenger boy anyway backward, either; he met the big fellow half-way, and for a minute or two there was about the liveliest little scrimmage there on the street as had ever taken place in the Capitol City.

A crowd quickly gathered, and cheered the two on, in the manner customary with crowds. Probably no one among the spectators knew of the youth, but as the messenger boy was the smaller and was handsome and manly-looking, so far as could be seen while they were moving about at such a lively rate, while the other had more of the appearance of a young tough, the sympathies of the crowd seemed to be with the boy in uniform.

"Go for him, youngster!"

"Give it to him!"

"You'll lick him, even though you aren't so big!"

"Smash him on the solar plexus!"

Such were a few of the bits of advice given to Ben Bolton—for such was the messenger boy's name—and he was doing his best to act on the advice, or, perhaps, he was simply doing his best, without regard to any advice.

Anyway, he was doing good work, for he was quicker than his opponent, and just about as strong, and he struck twice to the other's once, and he landed more blows than were those with his opponent.

Presently he got a good one in on his antagonist's jaw, and down the big fellow went, kerthump!

The spectators applauded loudly.

"Good! Good!"

"That's the way to do it!"

"You're all right!"

"That was a dandy clip!"

"Look at him! He's counting the stars!"

Indeed, it looked as if this were really the case, for the youth lay there, flat on his back, blinking up at the sky, a dazed look on his face.

"Get up!" cried Ben; "I'm in a hurry and can't afford to lose so much time."

"He's asleep and dreaming," said a man.

But just then the youth stirred, and a moment later he sat up.

"Does your head ache?" asked a spectator, with mock solicitude.

"Did you see stars, meteors, comets and so forth?" from another.

The youth growled like a bear with a sore head and scrambled to his feet.

"Are you ready for some more?" asked the messenger boy, squaring off.

Billy Belcher—such was the youth's name—shook his head and turned away with a shrug of the shoulders.

"I'll see ye ag'in," he snarled. "I'll settle wid ye, don' furgit et! I'll giv' ye er lickin' one uv dese days, dat's notever!"

"Do it now!" cried Ben promptly. "Don't put it off. There is no time like the present, as Arthur Augustus."

The crowd roared with laughter, but Billy Belcher did not stop. He increased his pace, in fact, and quickly disappeared around the corner.

"Well, it's all over, so I'll hurry on," said Ben. "I've lost too much time as it is."

He darted through the crowd and dashed away up the street, followed by the cheers of the crowd as it dispersed in various directions.

Ben was soon at his destination, delivered a telegraph message and hastened back to A. D. T. headquarters on the run, for he did not want to spoil his record of quickness and alertness by being longer about his work than was necessary.

He was back at headquarters quicker than most messengers would have been, and he had lost several minutes in his encounter with Billy Belcher, too.

It happened that the best boy on duty was just starting on a message, and Ben sat down, panting, and wiped his face with his handkerchief.

He had been in only a few minutes when he was called to the desk and was given a telegram to be delivered to Senator Farley.

"It's important, Ben," said the manager. "Don't stop to watch any dog fights."

"I'm off," said Ben. "I don't care for dog fights, anyway."

He was out of the building like a flash and dashed up Pennsylvania avenue at his best speed.

He was not long in reaching the Capitol, and he hastened up the steps and to the Senate chamber, where, owing to his uniform, he was admitted without question.

"Where is Senator Farley's desk?" he inquired of the doorkeeper.

"Yonder," pointing. "The old gentleman in the fourth seat from the rear, on the extreme left."

"Thank you."

"You had better wait a few minutes," said the doorkeeper, laying a hand on the boy's arm. "The Senator is to follow the man who is speaking, and is taking notes, and likely he wouldn't want to be bothered."

"No, I have a message and must deliver it now," said Ben. It is important, and I mustn't put it off."

"All right; go ahead."

Ben moved around to the extreme left and walked down to the desk where sat the old Senator. Ben laid the yellow envelope on the desk in front of the old man, with the remark:

"Telegram, sir."

The Senator dropped his pencil, took up the envelope, tore it open with trembling hands and then withdrew the sheet and glanced at the typewritten contents.

With a groan, he dropped over forward on his face on the desk, and lay there, limp and motionless.

"Heavens, I'm afraid he is dead!" exclaimed a man who sat just behind the old Senator. "He has had heart trouble for years." He rose and lifted the old man to a sitting posture and looked in his face.

"This man is dead!" he said in an awed voice. Then to Ben: "Run for a doctor!"

Instantly all was confusion in the Senate chamber, and Ben dashed out to go for a doctor.

Just as he was leaving the grounds he saw the young tough, Billy Belcher and another fellow just as tough-looking, standing on the corner. They saw him, and started forward to block his way.

"Hol' on!" cried Belcher. "I wanter talk ter ye!"

"Can't stop now," replied Ben. "I'm going for a doctor. Man dead in Senate chamber."

"Dat's a bluff!" cried Belcher, getting in front of Ben. "Say, w'y don' ye stop an' hev et out wid me, hey? W'y not do et now?"

For answer Ben shoved Belcher out of the way, sending him staggering into the gutter, and then bounded onward toward where he remembered having seen a doctor's sign.

CHAPTER II.
TWO AGAINST ONE.

Ben was quickly up in the doctor's office, and fortunately found the physician in. He told what was wanted, and the doctor lost no time, but grabbed his medicine case and hastened downstairs and toward the Capitol.

Ben had followed the doctor down to the street, and here he paused and looked after the man of medicine, and stood there, hesitating.

"No, I won't go back to the Senate chamber," he murmured. "I did all that was required of me when I delivered the message and got the doctor. I'll go back to headquarters."

When he got to headquarters the manager asked:

"Did you deliver the message to the Senator?"

"Yes, sir," was the reply.

"That's good. It was important. His wife is dead."

"So is he, I guess," replied Ben soberly.

The manager started.

"What!" he exclaimed. "You don't mean it?"

"Yes, sir. I gave him the telegram and he opened and read it, and then gasped and fell forward on his face on his desk. The man who sat just behind him lifted him up and said that he was dead."

"That's bad!"

"Yes, sir. I ran out and sent a doctor in. I didn't go back, but I have no doubt that the Senator is dead, for the other man said he has long been bothered with heart trouble."

"Likely the shock was too much for him."

"Yes, sir."

Then Ben went to his seat and picked up a paper and began reading.

Presently Ben's chum, Joe Hawley, came in and sat down beside him.

"What have you been doing to Billy Belcher?" he asked, in a low voice.

"Don't know him," replied Ben.

"Oh, yes, you do."

"No."

"Didn't you have a scrap with a fellow an hour or so ago, just off the avenue?"

"Sure!" with a smile. "Was that Billy Belcher?"

"Yes, and he's looking for you."

"In company with another chap about like himself, eh?"

"Yes. You have seen them?"

"Yes; they tried to head me off as I was running for a doctor, half an hour ago, up by the Capitol."

"You gave Belcher a licking, didn't you?"

"Yes; that is, I put him down once, and he didn't want any more."

"A quitter, eh?"

"Yes."

"I thought as much, else he wouldn't have had the other fellow along with him. Likely they intend to double up and go for you."

"That's it, no doubt."

"You'll have to look out. The two of them would be able to handle you, all right."

"I'll keep my eyes open."

"You had better. But, say, who were you running for a doctor for?"

Ben told him about the Senator.

"Oh, that was it, eh?"

"Yes."

"Well, the Senator is dead, sure enough."

"How do you know?"

"I was delivering a telegram up in the Capitol and heard some men talking about it."

Both boys were called to the desk just then and each was handed an envelope and told to hurry.

They glanced at the addresses on the envelopes and then dashed out and away in different directions, Joe calling back over his shoulder:

"Look out for Belcher!"

"Sure!" replied Ben.

He delivered the telegram and started back. He was on one of the residence streets, but as he neared the avenue he was suddenly confronted by Belcher and the other youth that he had seen in the young tough's company before.

"We've got ye now!" hissed Belcher, barring Ben's way.

"'We,' eh?" said Ben, a glint in his eyes that boded ill to the two toughs.

"Dat's wot I said, sonny; see!. Go fur 'im, Mike!"

They both rushed at Ben, and made a joint attack on the messenger boy.

Ben could hardly be expected to get the better of two young toughs, both of whom were older and larger than himself, and natural fighters at that, but he was a brave youth, and he gave them the best that he could, and for a minute or so he was successful in standing them off; indeed, he knocked Belcher down once and gave the other tough a black eye, but they suddenly closed in on him and hurled him to the ground and leaped upon him, snarling like tigers, and but for the interference of a man who suddenly came around the corner they would have beaten the youth up pretty bad, probably.

This man was a sailor, wearing the uniform of the United States navy, and when he saw the two youths on the one he strode forward and grabbing Belcher by the coat collar he flung him ten feet away, sending him rolling over and over.

"Avast, there!" the sailor roared. "That's not fair at all! Two on one is the game of cowards! Give the boy a chance and he'll thrash the two of ye, one at a time, and I'll bet on it!"

At this moment the other young tough was seen rolling over and over, Ben having got his foot against the fellow's stomach and given him a push with all his force. Then he leaped to his feet and cried:

"Much obliged to you, sir; and if you'll see to it that they don't both jump on me at once, I'll give them the worst thrashing they ever had!"

"Go for 'em, son! Take either one, an' I'll see to it that the other doesn't chip in. You shall have a fair show, or I'll know the reason why!"

Ben started toward Belcher, but that worthy had enough. He turned and fled, and when Ben turned toward the other youth, he followed the example set him by the brave Mr. Belcher.

"Ye've whipped 'em, son," cried the sailor. "They're running before the wind ye couldn't catch 'em with a torpedo boat."

"I'm much obliged to you, sir," said Ben. "They would have pounded me all up but for you."

"Don't mention it, my boy. I couldn't stand by and see the two of them give it to you. You're more than welcome."

They walked down the avenue together, and the sailor said his name was Jack Marble and that he was a sailor on board the cruiser Albermale, lying down by the navy yard, in the river.

"My name is Ben Bolton," said the messenger boy.

"Glad to know you, mate," was the reply. "Well, I hope we may meet again sometime."

"I hope so, Mr. Marble."

Then they parted and Ben was soon back on the bench at headquarters.

Joe came in soon afterwards and asked:

"See anything of Belcher?"

"Yes, I saw him."

"Was the other fellow with him?"

"Yes."

"And did they——"

"Yes, they went for me and we had it pretty lively for a little while, but then they got me down and would have pounded me up but for a sailor who happened along and pulled Belcher off. I kicked the other one off."

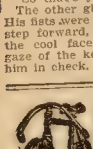
"Good! And then?"

"Then they sneaked. They didn't want any more when they saw that they couldn't jump onto me together."

"That's just like them—the cowards!"

When six o'clock came the day force went home and a night force took its place.

Ben lived with his widowed mother and a sister, Alice, fifteen years old, in one-half



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of a double house on a street in a quiet neighborhood, and he hastened home and got there just as supper was being placed on the table.

He kissed his mother and sister, and then they all sat up to the table and ate the frugal meal—for they were in straitened circumstances, being dependent on Ben's wages of six dollars a week and what Mrs. Bolton could earn taking in sewing. Alice went to school, as it was desired that she should have a good education and teach when she was old enough.

Soon after supper was over, Lucy Mayberry, whose folks lived in the other half of the house, came in, and was given a cordial welcome by the three. Lucy was sixteen years old and was Ben's sweetheart. She was a beautiful girl and a bright, sensible one. Her father was a clerk in the Department of Agriculture.

"What's the news, Ben?" she asked, and then Ben told about the death of Senator Farley, who had died of heart failure on reading a telegram that the youth had taken to him in the Senate chamber.

"Poor old man!" breathed Lucy, and Alice and her mother both gave utterance to expressions of sorrow over the fate of the old Senator.

They talked a couple of hours, but Ben was careful not to say anything about his encounters with Billy Belcher.

"I wish you lived ten blocks away, Lucy," said Ben, as the girl rose to go to her home in the other half of the house.

"Why?" she asked, in surprise.

"So I could get to walk home with you," was the smiling reply.

"I think he gave a bill each time in payment."

CHAPTER III.

FOLLOWING A SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER.

Just at this time the papers were filled with accounts of the doings of a band of burglars and counterfeiters, who seemed to be operating chiefly in Washington city.

The rascals seemed to take delight in working right under the noses of the Government officials.

The secret service department was hard at work trying to get the band located and capture it, but so far had not been successful. The criminals were clever and skilful, indeed.

The day succeeding that on which occurred the events already narrated Ben was sent to the secret service department with a telegram for the chief.

Ben hastened there and was ushered into the presence of the chief. There was another man there, evidently another officer high up in the department.

Ben delivered the message and the chief signed the book.

"Wait," he said. "There may be an answer."

He tore open the envelope and read the message.

"Listen to this, Jardine," he said; "it is from our man at Wilmington, and he says that the counterfeit bills are being placed in circulation at a lively rate!"

"Humph!" from the other. "We must run those fellows to earth."

"We must; but how?"

The other shook his head.

"You have me there. We have tried every plan that we can think of, it seems to me."

"Yes, but still there must be some way of getting at them."

"Yes, we will keep at it till we hit upon the right plan."

"Or till Fortune lands them in our hands."

"Yes."

"I'll answer this telegram."

The chief wrote a brief message and handed it to Ben, with the words:

"Have that sent as soon as you get back to the office."

"Very well, sir," said Ben, and bowing, he took his departure.

He was soon back at the headquarters, and handed the message to the manager and took his seat.

He was thinking of the band of burglars and counterfeiters and wishing that he might be able to do something to bring them to justice.

But it was not likely that he, a mere boy, could do anything of the kind.

That evening as he was on his way home Ben saw two men standing beside a cab, talking. He stopped to look in at a window where clothing was displayed, and while standing there he heard some of the conversation between the two men.

"You are coming out to the Roost?" he heard one say.

"Yes, I'll be there about half-past ten," was the reply.

"All right; don't fail."

"I won't."

"There is important work to be done; you understand?"

"Fully."

"Good! So long, till——"

"So long."

Then one of the two climbed into the cab, which was driven away, and the other walked down Pennsylvania avenue.

Somehow, Ben got the idea into his head that these men might be members of the band of burglars and counterfeiters. He hardly knew what made him get such an idea—unless it was the mention of the name of the place where the man in the cab was going, the "Roost." That was such a peculiar name that Ben did not believe it would be applied to an ordinary residence.

"It is more like the name that would be given a rendezvous or hiding place of robbers," was his thought.

He remembered what the chief of the secret service department had said, and he was impressed with the belief that if he were to follow the man, he might learn something that would be of value and aid the chief to run the burglars and counterfeiters to earth.

"Do it!" something seemed to say to him; "do it now!"

"I will!" he murmured. And then he set out down the street, in the wake of the man in question.

The man went into a hotel lobby and bought some cigars. Then he sat down and took up a paper and began to read. Ben, standing outside, could see the man through the window, and he waited in the vicinity as patiently as was possible.

Presently the man came out, walked slowly down the avenue, and in the next block he paused and entered a cigar store and bought some more cigars.

He had tossed a partly-consumed cigar aside before entering, and now he lighted one of the cigars, chatted a few moments with the dealer and came out on the street and made his way onward, walking slowly.

Presently he tossed the partly-consumed cigar aside and entered another cigar store and bought more cigars, pausing to light one before coming forth again.

"Well, he is laying in a supply of cigars, and that's a fact!" was Ben's thought. And then he was struck with another thought: Might the man not be buying merely for the purpose of passing counterfeit money?

"I think he gave a bill each time in payment and received change back," was Ben's thought.

When the man came forth again and started down the street, Ben was not far behind him, nor was the boy surprised to see the man threw the cigar away a few minutes later and enter another cigar store and purchase some cigars.

Peering in through the window, Ben saw the man give the proprietor a banknote in payment and receive other bills in change.

Presently the man came forth and sauntered on down the avenue, and Ben continued after him.

"I've started into this affair and I'm going to stick to it," was Ben's thought. "I'll find out where the 'Roost' is, if it takes me all night."

The man turned after a while and came back up the street, and Ben busied himself looking in the window of a store till the fellow had got past. Then he set out in pursuit, but was careful to stay far enough behind so as not to attract the man's attention in case he looked around.

Back up the street they went, and the man entered the Willard Hotel and sat in the lobby perhaps three-quarters of an hour. Ben stayed outside and waited with all the patience he could command. He was a boy of action and this kind of work did not suit him as well as it might.

He was determined to see the affair through, however, and so he waited, and when the man came out and beckoned to a cabman, Ben was on the alert at once.

Luckily the cab was a four-wheeler and the driver was on a seat in front, instead of being perched up behind, and Ben decided that he would be a passenger at the rear, if it could be managed at all.

The cabman drove up and the man gave him some low-voiced instructions and then got in. The driver closed the door with a clang, climbed to his seat and drove away up the street, toward the Treasury building.

Ben made a dash and swung himself in under the cab and hung on tightly. He was afraid that some one on the sidewalk would see him and call to the driver, but this did not occur, and after the cab was off Pennsylvania avenue and making its way along less frequented streets, he did not so much fear discovery.

"I guess I'm all right," was his thought, "but this isn't the most comfortable way in the world to ride."

On rattled the cab, and presently it was out of the city and dashing along a country road.

It was a pretty dark night, and Ben was glad of this. It would make him less likely to be discovered.

On rattled the cab for nearly an hour and then it came to a stop in the midst of heavy timber. Ben doubted not that they were somewhere in the vicinity of the Potomac River.

He heard the driver leap down and open the door and say:

"Here we are, sir."

"All right, my man. Just tie your horses and wait for me. I'll be gone an hour, maybe two, but I'll pay you well for your time."

"That's all right, sir. The horses will be glad to stand and I can take a snooze on the cushions."

"True."

Then the man stepped out of the cab and made his way into the timber, moving slowly, for it was very dark.

Ben had already made a detour, and when he learned which way the man was going, as he was able to do by the sense of hearing, he followed.

"I don't know what I am getting into," thought Ben, "but I'm not going to back out now. The 'Roost' may be the headquarters of that band of burglars and counterfeiters, and if it is and I can get it located and carry the information to the chief of the secret service, it will be a big feather in my cap."

He stole after the man, and fifteen minutes later they emerged into an open space of an acre in extent, perhaps, and at the farther side was a log house, as could be made out by means of lights which shone through a couple of windows in the front.

Ben stopped, but the man strode onward, and pausing in front of the door, gave three sharp raps.

The next moment the door was opened and the man passed quickly into the house and the door was closed again.

Ben was eager and somewhat excited as well.

"It's up to you, Ben Bolton," he murmured. "If ever you had a chance to distinguish yourself, it is surely right now, and if you ever expect to do anything to distinguish yourself, that time is certainly now. Do it now, my boy!"

Setting his teeth grimly together, he moved cautiously toward the house.

This capital story of boyhood luck and adventure will be continued in the Ledger issue of next week. It will be to your pleasure and profit to follow its characters to the dramatic and remarkable close. Would you like one of our fine King Cameras without cost, or six of our fine summer patterns entirely free? Then subscribe for the Ledger and they will be sent to you. Read our premium announcement on pages thirteen and fifteen.

The Way to Wear 'Em.

Some young women in England have begun to dress out and out like men. They wear a long coat cut like a hunting coat, a cap, riding breeches and top boots. It is a handsome costume and it is not immodest, but undoubtedly it attracts a good deal of attention.

They have been telling in London lately a story about a girl who adopted this riding rig. Pulling up her horse one afternoon she said to an artisan who was passing: "Can you tell me if this is the way to Wareham?" The man looked her over carefully. Then he touched his cap in a respectful manner and replied: "Yes, miss, yes—you seem to 'ave got 'em on all right."

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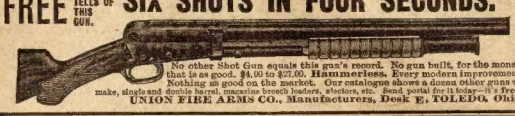

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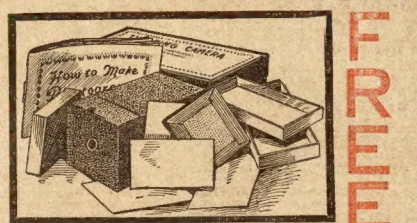

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RONDEAU.

"Ah, no!" she cried, and turned away her head,
"It cannot be. But I will be instead
A sister, who a sister's love will show,
From whom sweet sympathy will ever flow,
Who for your griefs will tears of pity shed.
"This is the thing that I had come to dread.
I would, indeed, your wounds could be unsaid.
Think not I meant to trifle with you. No,
Ah, no," she cried.

The youth uprose. His face was growing red.
No more with her could he now hope to wed.
No aspect did he wear of grief or woe.
"All right," he said. "I think I'd better go.
But tell me, is this straight? Now, on the dead?"
"Ah, no," she cried.

A STORY OF LUCK.

BY ALVAH MILTON KERR.

They were pitching horseshoes in Sacktown when I arrived, and of such moment was the proceedings scarcely a glance of regard was proffered me. This was indeed noteworthy, since I was a stranger riding a smart young horse down Sacktown's main street. But Sacktown was aroused, and hanging tremblingly upon the whim of Fortune, with something of the intensity of a lover watching for the blessed light of consent or refusal in a maiden's face.

The day was a Fourth of July, and Sacktown's most proficient "pitcher," a bald and ruddy old pioneer, was measuring pedancies with the champions, as represented in the person of its most skillful player, a brown, shock-haired youth, known throughout the region as Satan Joe; this was why my advent came untouched of glory.

The town lay between two long green hills in western Missouri, untroubled by steam, unvexed by the press, but little gnawed of care, and with seemingly few ambitions greater than watching the airy gyres of the luck-bringing horseshoe.

The game was in progress across the street from the Sacktown House, a weather-beaten affair which had seen some importance in stage-coach days, and the long sagging veranda was abloom with Sacktown's beauty. Several of the faces were rosy and wholesome, but the general tone, despite a plethora of red and yellow ribbons, was that of a diet of fat meat, corn pone and saleratus biscuit.

"Leven!" cried the referee, and Satan Joe of the Bottoms had pitched a shoe.

"Yaas," said a tanned Sacktownite, craning up his neck with a visible tremor; "yaas, th' tarnal theng's leaning ergin the meg! That's forty-eight pints fur Satan, an' Uncle Sile's on'y got in forty-five; fifty's th' game, ye know. Whew!"

Uncle Sile took up his two horseshoes, stepped in with his heel against the meg, poised himself carefully and pitched. Down came the iron shoe upon the one leaning against the opposite meg, spurning it away with a jingle of metallic notes and settling with a tremor in its place; up went a shout, and Sacktown clapped its hands in approval. Satan Joe lifted one of his bare brown feet and struck it into the hot dust impatiently. Unconsciously he pulled back the sleeves from his sunburned wrists and spat in his hands. Uncle Sile made the same strengthening preparation but with grave deliberation, then steadied himself, and away went his shoe. It came down two feet beyond the objective pin, spun around and lay with corks up. The Bottoms groaned derisively.

"Satan forty-eight, Uncle Sile forty-seven," said the referee, pushing back the limp hat-rim from his reeking forehead. A hush fell on the crowd. The men, mainly weatherbeaten, unshaven fellows, chewed their tobacco-cuds furiously and expectorated contemptuously.

"Now, Joe, knock it hard! gin us a ringer an' we got 'em," bawled Hank Ivers of the Bottoms, pushing his way to the front of the crowd. "I got er gallon uv whisky up on th' square, Joe; er ye don't win I'll dance on y'r coffin, shore!"

Satan Joe, half way to the opposite ground-pin, stopped and gave the speaker an angry look, then went on. He caught up his two of shoes, set his tough brown head against the meg, flung back the mat of hair from his forehead with a sweep of the hand and the eyes fixed upon the ground-pin thirty-five feet away. He stepped one foot forward and his first shoe shot upward and outward. It described a beautiful curve, turning like a wheel laid flat upon the air, and descended upon the pin, but bounded off and rolled away.

"Put-er belt under that ar shoe!" cried a Sacktown fellow. The crowd laughed. Hank Ivers swore under his breath. The shock-haired youth poised his second shoe and sent it upon the tracks of the first. It came down plumply around the peg, biting its corks firmly into the ground and remained.

"Ringer!" said the referee, and Sacktown groaned and the Bottoms shouted.

Uncle Sile stepped in by the pin, threw off his hat and drew up his sleeves. He poised himself with great care, and the hush deepened. Just as he drew back his hand to pitch, a freckled-faced girl with a sunbonnet on her seat on the porch and called out, "You Pap!" and the man turned his head. "Wal, what air it, Sue?" he asked.

"Oh—nothin'," and with a confused blush the girl sat down. Her call was obviously a warning, but whether or not the familiar intonation implied that she wished her father to lose or win was impossible of discovery. Satan Joe glanced toward the porch and the sunburn of his face deepened its red. The old man laughed cheerily, pushed up his sleeves again, and up and away went the first shoe; too far! Sacktown held its breath. Only one chance remained for the town to continue its grasp upon the championship; must Uncle Sile go to the detested Bottoms? Carried away, too, by the rivalship! Uncle Sile took off his glasses, wiped and adjusted them, drew in his breath, settled himself firmly on both feet, peered keenly at the distant pin, drew back his arm and sped the revolving shoe upon its journey. He stood with hand upon lifted and open mouth watching the gyrating shoe until, with a clang of smiting metal, it struck, then he leaped into the air and let go a triumphant peare of laughter, followed by a roar of victorious cries from the Sacktownites.

"Ringer!" shouted the referee. "Top shoe counts; ringer counts three; Uncle Sile fifty pints, Satan Joe forty-eight; game out!"

Sacktown's beauty rose and shook its cotton kerchief at Uncle Sile approvingly; Sacktown's brawn smote him on the back, yelled and started on a run for the saloon. Was it not the "Fourth?" and down their Uncle Sile still the horseshoe king of the valley. He looked toward the porch, then, turning his battered hat about in his hands in absent fashion, Hank Ivers pushed an angry face through the crowd toward Uncle Sile and the referee.

"No, yeh don't! no yeh don't, durned ef yeh do, gentlemen. Not while Hank Ivers is 'round! Thet las' throw wuz er tiel" he snarled, through his nose. "Thet hes got ter be pitched over, er durned if I don't be har pullin' round here!' I'm frum th' Bottoms, an' yeh kent ride over us, not by er jug full!" He pushed Uncle Sile back roughly.

"Yeh keep y'r han's offen him," said the vanquished Joe. "He beat me fair an' square. No buddy 'sept er ornery coward'd lay'er rough han' on er ole man like him."

"Yeh keep blattin', yeh young whelp, an' I'll wipe th' groun' weth yeh in er minnet," he snarled the burly Ivers, livid, at Joe.

"Yeh keep y'r han's offen ole people er ye'll hev it ter do," said Joe, with flashing eyes.

With an oath Ivers leaped at him. In the same instant the sinewy stripling stooped down and seemingly shot his body like a bolt along the ground. It was the most rapid and dexterous movement I ever witnessed in a physical encounter. The youth's head passed between the other's limbs midway from ankle to knee, and his shoulders swept them from their feet from under him and came upon his face in shocking fashion. With incredible swiftness the youth whipped about and planted his bare foot on the back of the fallen man's neck, pinning him to the ground.

"Fer er peck of oats I'd shet off y'r wind, shore," said this modern David, through his teeth. Then suddenly he sprang back, laughed, picked up his hat and set it on his shock of hair. "Git up, Hank, an' wush y'r face an' go home," he said. "Git y'rself er gardeen 'pinted 'fore yeh leave th' Bottoms ergin!" With that he turned on his heel and, pushing out through the cheering crowd, mounted a mule, which was hitched to a post, and rode off toward the Bottoms. As he made the elbow, where the road turned to cross the creek, he looked back. The freckled-faced girl stuck her handkerchief into the air and smiled. He took off his hat, waved it, sent back a long Indian-like yell to the crowd, then passed out of sight.

By this time the stunned and dusty Ivers had got to his feet, and was being led away to the saloon, cursing as he went. The people were laughing and moving about, and commenting forcibly and inelegantly enough upon the several phases of the contest.

"Hit wuz er clost shave fur Uncle Sile, shore," said a Bottomite.

"Yas, th' boy pitches like er rifle; no gittin' roun' thet," answered a Sacktownite, conciliatingly. "An' th' way he pulled Hank Ivers! Did yeh see hit? W'y, 'e jes' thrushed 'im onter th' groun' like er empty pair uv pants! Haw! Haw!"

"Yaas, I seed hit! Haw! Haw! Haw!"

"Say," in a confidential undertone, "I hearn Satan Joe wuz shinin' roun' Uncle Sile's gal Sue. Yeh hearn anythen uv hit? No? Wal, my ole 'oman says thet she hearn thet Trace Hyler's 'oman tole Jed Heater's sister thet she hearn frum Nance Tooter, what is workin' at Uncle Sile's, thet Joe'n he worked thar er spell in cornplantin', tuck er great shine ter Sue, an' thet now ever time he goes er huntin' he comes up roun' thet way. Uncle Sile he don't like Joe, an' says ef th' boy been er laffin' 'bout hit, an' says ef th' boy been er laffin' 'bout hit, an' says ef th' boy been er laffin' 'bout hit

CIRCUMSTANCES AND CASES.

There's plenty of work for this morning," she cried;
"There's baking and scrubbing, and sweeping besides."
But she went at the baking with laughter and song;
And said, as she finished, "That didn't take long."

And then to the scrubbing—and how she did scrub!
The boards were like snow when she gave the last rub.
Her hands were so deft, and her arms were so strong;
And she said, as she finished, "That didn't take long."

And then to the sweeping—she made the dust fly.
She looked at her work with a critical eye,
And yet all the time she kept humming a song,
And she tacked to the last verse, "That didn't take long."

The dinner was over, the work was all done;
"And now for that errand," she said, "I must run!
Six o'clock comes so soon when the days are so long."
And off she went, humming a verse of that song.

The road she'd to travel was straight as a die,
She knew every step, and she meant just to fly;
But she met an acquaintance down there by the stile,
And somehow—that errand—it took a good while.

ALONE WITH THE DEAD.

BY GUY GOULD.

It was a dreary prospect that met Ethel's gaze as she stood looking wearily from the window in the early morning. A long stretch of level prairie, with here and there a leafless tree, or a little, low, weather-stained house.

As she turned from the window the prospect was still more dreary. A small room, scantily furnished, cold, desolate and gloomy, yet not wholly cheerless.

Little pattering feet; a silvery laugh, and from a tiny bedroom came a vision of infantile loveliness.

Daisy was almost five years old, but scarcely larger than most girls of three. Ethel caught the dainty darling in her arms, kissing her again and again.

"Mamma, may I go to school today with Willie and wear my pretty blue frock?" cried the little darling.

"Oh, Daisy, dear, it is so far, and mamma will be so lonesome."

"Please let her go," pleaded Will, a bright, beautiful boy of ten. "I will draw her all the way in my wagon."

It was a lovely morning, the sky clear, not a cloud as big as a man's hand. The wind blew from the south, warm and balmy as June.

The children were soon ready for school. Ethel watched them until the last glitter of the morning sun faded from Daisy's golden-brown hair.

Ethel Edison was a lovely, fragile little woman, in no way fitted for the rough, hard life of a Western farmer's wife. Her father, Mr. Francis, was a wealthy mill-owner, living in L——, Mass. His home was adorned with all the elegance, refinement and luxury money can buy. Ethel was an only child, petted and indulged by her mother, and almost idolized by her father.

When she was eighteen, Arthur Edison secured employment as clerk in her father's office. He was the son of her mother's dearest friend, and was, therefore, often invited by Mr. Francis to his home, and, of course, was soon very much in love with Ethel. She returned his affection, never dreaming that her father would be displeased; but when Arthur declared his love, Mr. Francis was very angry, discharged him from his office, bade Ethel give up her lover, or leave his house.

Give up her lover she could not, and they were married and came to Nebraska.

Arthur bought a farm, built a small house, and for a time prospered very well. Then one calamity was followed by other misfortunes, and matters became worse and worse from year to year. For the last few months Arthur's health had been failing.

"Nothing much," he told Ethel; "only he didn't seem to have any strength."

"A little trouble with the heart," the doctor said.

This, however, was the first day he had been unable to get up. All night Ethel had watched and worked over him, trying to ease the dreadful pains in his side, and at last her efforts were successful, for he lay quiet, seemingly asleep.

Ethel drew the big rocking-chair close to the bed, and was soon interested in reading. Suddenly the room darkened, grew cold and chilly in a moment, and at the same instant there came a frightful roar.

Ethel dropped her paper and ran to the door, intending to go and meet Willie and Daisy. She knew they must be on their way home from school, as it was past four o'clock. Vain thought! The wind blew a gale, the atmosphere was one huge mass of snow, the darkness so dense it was impossible to see two rods from the house. A first-class blizzard was in progress.

Almost paralyzed with fear, Ethel tried to rouse her husband; but, alas! what she thought sleep proved to be stupor. A vacant stare, a few unintelligible words, the muttering of a wandering brain—that was all.

Wild with anxiety lest her darlings were out in the fearful storm, Ethel knelt, and tried to pray. No sound came from her pale lips, but she became somewhat calmer.

If Willie and Daisy had started for home as soon as school was out they must have reached Farmer Cooley's before the fury of the storm burst. Yes, very likely they were there. But could one live until morning? Never had Daisy been away from her a night since her little brown head first lay on her arm.

Fiercer raged the storm, colder grew the room. Ethel filled the stove with corn-cobs—her only fuel—then laid her head beside her husband's, pleading piteously for one word—one kiss.

The long, weary hours wore slowly away. The corn-cobs were all gone, the fire out, the room so cold the clock had stopped; but the first glimmer of dawn was in the East.

Arthur threw his arm around Ethel's neck, drew her haggard face to his, then spoke—he was rational now:

"Ethel, my precious little wife, do you know that I am dying? May God pity you and our dear little ones when I am gone. Go, love, now, and bring them, that I may kiss their sweet lips once more and bid them a last good-by."

Merciful Father! could she tell her dying husband that she knew not where their children were?—that even now two little brown heads might be lying on the frozen ground, the cruel white snow their winding-sheet; but it was not necessary. A long sigh, a few quivering heart-beats, and Ethel was alone with her dead. One cry came from her lips; then she fell to the floor unconscious.

* * * * * * *

Farmer Cooley was up as soon as the first streak of daylight appeared, and started to let Arthur and Ethel know that their children were safe at his house, sleeping sweetly as two little dormice.

He knocked, but receiving no response, the farmer burst open the door, and discovered the dead body of Arthur, and beside it the almost lifeless body of Ethel.

Kind neighbors laid Arthur tenderly to rest on the prairie, and as tenderly cared for Ethel until her father and mother came. Mr. Francis reproached himself bitterly when he comprehended the terrible sufferings of his daughter.

After many weeks of illness Ethel came slowly back to life, and as soon as she could bear the journey, her father took her and her darlings to his beautiful home, on the bank of the Merrimac, where she still lives, devoting her life to her children and works of charity; but at the age of thirty, many a silvery thread mingles with her dark-brown hair.

Bryan's Toes Stuck Out.

A writer relates with much glee an incident that befell William Jennings Bryan in Japan. He went to one of the temples in Tokio to see the shrines of some of Japan's departed statesmen. It was at Shiba Park, where the most beautiful of the Tokugawa temples are located. This was the first Japanese temple that Mr. Bryan had ever visited. He was accompanied by several dignitaries of the municipality of Tokio, who had come to act as an escort of honor.

At the temple door the Japanese gentlemen began to remove their shoes, according to unalterable custom. Mr. Bryan took off his low shoes, and was horrified to find that most of the great toe and part of the second toe of one of his feet were protruding boldly from his sock. There was no help for it; the great American statesman, with his guard of honor, had to patter over the bronze floors of the shrines at Shiba with two toes exposed.

"Never have I felt the lack of dignity so much as on that occasion," said Mr. Bryan. "Anyway, I bought the socks in Japan, and that accounts for the fact that such a hole could be worn between the time I put them on in the morning and the time I took off my shoes at the temple door in the afternoon."—The Commoner.

Safe.

Jack—You have written that your love will never fade? Be careful, old chap. You know it is dangerous to write love letters these days.

Dick—Oh, but I didn't say the ink would never fade. That'll fade in two or three days and I'll be safe.

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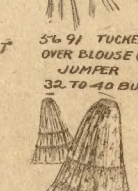
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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

THE DISCOVERER.

Uv mornin's when I'm washed an' dressed
An' got my ball an' bat
An' nearly time to start to school,
I allus lose my hat.
An' nen I look upon the rack
An' underneath the mat.
An' 't last I have to give it up
An' yell, "Ma, where's it at?"
An' ma comes out right where I looked
An' puts her hand right on it.

Ma's teachin' us to help ourselves
An' every Saturday night
She has us hunt our Sunday clothes
An' see they're all jis' right.
There's allus somepin' at's skipped out
Nen Sis an me, we spat;
I haf to holler down to ma
An' ma comes up an' hardly looks
An' puts her hand right on it.

Nen pa he gits so all fired mad
On Sunday afternoon,
Because the sportin' sheet is gone;
He looks awhile an' nen says soon:
"He don't care nothin' 'bout the fact
That he ain't read the races;
He only wants us young uns all
To put things in their places."

Ma's jest set down to read a spell,
She's hot an' tired at that;
But pa says to her anyway:
"That paper, where's it at?"
An' ma lays down her book an' goes
An' puts her hand right on it.

Whirling Dervish.

Many circuses and Wild West shows have a "Whirling Dervish" for one of their attractions, and they are certainly wonderful creatures.

They are Mohammedans from Persia, a set of men who devote, or are supposed to devote their entire time to religion, and are perhaps as near like monks as anything else. Fasting for days at a time with continual prayer, at last affects their minds and they see wonderful visions which they disclose to their superstitious brothers, over whom they have great influence. They are always miserably poor, living on charity, and earn what little they have by being hired to mourn at funerals, or to conduct religious ceremonies.

Some of these men perform most wonderful tricks, such as fire-eating, juggling and walking on broken glass. How they do them will never be known, but they are supposed to be invested with supernatural power, which is, of course, untrue. We are all familiar with the "whirling dervish." This takes years of practice, but finally they become so expert, and are so used to it, that they can "whirl" for hours without becoming dizzy.

Chance for a Home-Run.

A clever teacher, who has the power of calling out originality in her pupils, says that she would have no use for text books if she took time to answer all the startling questions asked in the classroom. One day the attraction of gravitation was under discussion, when one of the boys said he didn't see any need of it, anyway.

"It seems to me," said he, "there's no particular use in having the earth attract things. Now, when the apple fell, and made Newton think out the reason for it, that apple might just as well have stayed where it was until somebody gathered it."

"You play ball, don't you," asked the teacher. "Well, suppose you knock the ball very high, what happens?"

"It falls."

"But if there were no attraction towards the earth, it wouldn't fall. Don't you think that might prove inconvenient?"

"My!" cried the boy; "what a bully chance for a home-run!"

Strange Story of Lost Child.

A mother living on a homestead in the bush near Louth, New South Wales, lost her little girl, then 2½ years old, about four years ago, says the London Evening Standard. The child had wandered in search of flowers and no trace could be found of her. News came lately that a little white girl had been found in a black's camp, in southwest Queensland. Photographs of the girl were forwarded, which, in spite of the change that time and a nomadic life had made, the mother recognized, and her child has now been restored to her.

THE HONOR ROLL.

"It is not always the doing well
That measures the fame of a man;
The hero is he who the world can see
Is doing the best that he can."

Aunt Clara—And so you heard your father say that he wanted a gun, and you are going to surprise him on the anniversary of his birthday by presenting him with one?

Little Mabel—Yes. I've never seen the kind that I'll get for him, but it must be just the thing for father. I'm going to present him with a pop gun.

A "Property" Sale.

A French theatrical manager recently advertised some "properties," as stage accessories are called, that he had for sale. Here is the amusing form in which the advertisement appeared:

A sea, consisting of twelve waves, one of which is damaged.

Eighteen clouds edged with black, and in good repair.

A rainbow, somewhat faded.

A beautiful snowstorm, of Auvergne paper.

Three bottles of lightning.

A setting sun, not worth much; and a new moon, rather old.

Othello's handkerchief and a pasha's moustache.

Cleopatra's asp.

A complete repast, consisting of four cardboard entrees, a cardboard pie, a fowl of the same material, and several oak bottles.

Five yards of tin chain, a clanking of which is beautiful, and causes torrents of tears to flow.

The Life of an Ant.

Most of the readers know, perhaps, that Sir John Lubbock is the best authority on the nature and habits of ants, but they may not have heard of an experiment that he made, to determine how long a common ant would live if properly cared for. He took every proper precaution to keep the ant from harm, and to give it suitable nourishment, and it lived for fifteen years, the greatest age that any kind of insect ever attained, so far as known. Another specimen lived for thirteen years, and a third, a queen-ant of a black species, laid fertile eggs after she had passed the age of nine years.

Jimmy Jenkins—Gee! I wish my father was a whaler.
Billy Bowline—Yes, it'd prob'ly improve yer manners. I dunno's I ever seen a kid thet needed whalin' wuss'n you do.

WILLIE'S SUGGESTION.

One day when mamma was quite busy
With her work the house about,
She spoke to Master Willie,
Who was ready to go out.
"Can't you stay and help your mamma?"
She asked him, with a smile;
"Your baby brother's crying—
Will you rock him for a while?"
"Oh," Will answered, "I don't want to;
Can't you do it?" "No," said she;
"You can see your mother's hands are
Just as full as they can be."
"Well"—and Willie caught her apron—
"Harry Johnson I must meet;
If your hands are full, dear mother,
Can't you rock him with your feet?"

Adds to Teacher's Story.

An imaginative little fellow of 4 was listening to the teacher's account of her little dog Gyp, who had a great habit of chasing his tail. When the opportunity was given for remarks he told the following:

"My papa had a doggie whose name was Keyser, and he used to chase his tail all the time. One day he chased faster and faster, and say, teacher, he caught it and began to chew it, he was so mad at his tail, and he chewed and chewed till he ate himself all up."

THE GLUTTON.

"I should like to know," said papa,
As they at the table sat,
"What you eat so fast for, Tommy—
Almost gluttony is that!"
"Well, you see, pa," answered Tommy,
"'Twixt a swallow and a puff,
"I'm afraid that I might get
Through before I've got enough."

Out of the Mouths of Babes.

Teacher—Tommy, what are the different kinds of time in use?

Small Tommy—Sun time, standard time, fly time and a monkey-and-parrot time.

Sunday School Teacher—Augustus, what does it signify when they say a man is above reproach?

Augustus—It signifies he's dead.

"Now Johnny," said the Sunday school teacher, "can you tell me what happened to the giant, Goliath?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered Johnny. "David rocked him to sleep."

"Remember, Harry," said the good parson, "you need never be afraid to tell the truth."

"I ain't," replied the little fellow. "It's telling a story without being found out that worries me."

A Pretty Bird Story.

A man who is fond of watching birds, told the editor, recently, a pretty story of some robins and catbirds. The robins had built their nest on a fence near his house, and a pair of cat-birds had built in a bush close to the fence. The two pairs hatched out their broods at about the same time, and everything went well for a while. Then the cat-birds were seen no more; perhaps they had been shot. Being thus deprived of food, the young cat-birds were starving, but they soon noticed the old robins bringing food to their little ones and they would open their mouths, thrust up their heads and make a great outcry. Presently it was seen that the robins were feeding the hungry orphans. Every night, too while one of the robins covered their own brood the other covered the little catbirds. In this way both broods were reared, the cat-birds growing up as strong and lively as if they had been cared for by their own parents.

Wrong Way.

Rob and Will were neighbors and close friends, until, unfortunately, they both fell victims to the fascinations of small Louise, who lived across the street. Then there was a bitter rivalry between them. Rob's father arrived on the scene one day, and found them rolling over each other on the sidewalk in a hand to hand fight. Seizing them each by the collar, he brought them to their feet, demanding the reason for such conduct. Smarting with a sense of injury, and, half choking with rage, Rob blurted out: "I gave Will a bag of candy to keep away from Louise, and he went and gave it to her!"

Pony Goes to School.

Barney, the little black pony for some years owned by John A. Jones, city engineer of Lewiston, has been sold to Mr. Conant, of Lebanon, who purchased him for the use of his daughter, an invalid, says the Boston Herald.

Every day the little girl rides Barney the half mile from her home to the schoolhouse, then turns him loose, and he promptly goes home; at the proper time the people at home start him away down the road, and he never fails to be waiting for his mistress when school is dismissed. He learned this trick in a very few days and seems to take much pride in it.

Oil Birds.

One of the species of South America is the "oil-bird," or guacharo. It breeds in rocky caves on the mainland, and one of its favorite haunts is the island of Trinidad. It lays its eggs in a nest made of mud, and the young birds are prodigiously fat. The natives melt the fat down in clay pots, and produce from it a kind of butter. The caves inhabited by the birds are usually accessible only from the sea, and the hunting of them is sometimes an exciting sport.